

STUDIES
in
CHARACTER

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Studies in Character

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BY

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"Poems and Verses"*



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STUDIES IN CHARACTER.

WE are all better not worse than we picture ourselves to be. Self-depreciation is often mistaken for humility, while on the other hand self-exaggeration frequently usurps the throne of genuine self-knowledge. True character, and the knowledge thereof, invariably lies within the intermediate space between the extremes of human estimate of individual worth. Above the person, frail, imperfect and human, towers the noble individual whose Ego is the Deity, whose abiding place is perfection, and whose destiny is immortal dominion over the lesser creations of infinite Mind. Honesty to one's self is as important as to one's fellow men. Dignified and sincere self-confidence, if built upon a foundation of spiritual strength and demonstrable ability, is not egotism but symmetrical individualism. Men rise in the

scale of being through trust in their divine characteristics, which in some instances abide like certain treasures near the surface of their minds, while in other cases virtue, and the strength it begets, lie deep in the nature, latent in consciousness. Most men manifest certain cardinal virtues with conspicuous force, even if such virtues are surrounded with many weeds of human nature. If men are approached, dealt with, and reasonably trusted upon the basis of these visible strong points, they usually respond to our advances, give us their confidence, and allow us to help them. Society and life is founded upon a basis of divine reciprocity. We are rich as we give; we live in proportion to the unselfishness of our love, and we become poor in the ratio that we indulge habits of introspection, self-centered interest and personal gain. Pure selfless love increases through reflection and radiation, not through processes of exclusiveness or personality. Heaven is to us an individual kingdom of immortal bliss, if we seek it for its own glory of idealism. But if fear be the motive power that

actuates our steps toward its portals, it has for us "no glory, no light nor sunshine pure." Good is its own best friend and rewarder, and vice and dishonesty their own worst enemies and destroyers. Men come closest to their true selves in the sober moments of life, under the chastening shadows of sorrow and loss; also through the operation of contrasting their own with stronger and grander natures. Comparisons are often helpful, frequently discouraging, sometimes harmful. Life is made up of states and stages of comparison. The laws of progression and evolution involve constant comparisons of the attainments and possessions of yesterday with the added gains of to-day. Involuntarily our thoughts enter into processes of comparison. To the extent only that this habit begets increased activity and optimism can it be said to be a legitimate one. The ever-present to-day is the raw material out of which to-morrow is made. Our pasts are dead, lifeless, and are of value to us in the practical now of to-day only as their deep lessons have been intelligently assimilated. The

present, therefore, predicts and predestines the character of the future. The eternal now of eternity bids us live one day at a time and look above, not backward, nor beneath, nor speculatively forward, but heavenward and Godward, for there alone is life and blessedness. Vain regrets for the past are of no avail, nor is chronic penitence and sorrow for erring action or wrong living, reasonable or helpful. To regret one's errors to the point of not repeating them is true repentance. Emotional reactionary habits of thought are not conducive to stability of character, nor to the evolution of ideal manhood and womanhood. Our ideals are glimpses of our own divine individualities which reflect the infinite perfection that we call God. To know the future with prophetic foresight is to be mentally in advance of the average mind, to enter some promised land of spiritual discernment before the masses gain its borders, or to live on the heights of sinless thought viewing the great world of transcendentalism.

LOVE.

I.

God is Love and whosoever abideth in Love abideth in God and God in him.—*John*.

IN one of the eastern religions the most revered and loved name for God is Smiling Mother. The disciple who wrote the most metaphysical of the four Gospels and left to humanity the rich spiritual legacy of the Patmos revelation, defines the eternal Father and Mother, God, the Creator of the universe and man, as Love. Love is therefore not one of the names of God, nor a name for God, but Love is the All in All God. It is the universal creator of man and the universe; the Ego of all distinctive individuality; the essence of being, the origin and ultimate of all existence. The universal life energy is therefore the immanent Love. As there is but one God, or divine nature, there can

therefore be but one Love, which is not only the Ego of man, but is his spiritual life-breath, character and mind. The love of Love is the love of God, alias Good, Truth, Beauty, Pure Mind. Real love is therefore immaterial, spiritual, supersensual, relating to Mind or Spirit, not matter or materialism. The immanent God is the everpresence of Love. A correct and justifiable analysis of love leads to the deduction, that because there is no human God, no material deity, there is no such thing as merely human love, nor any *real* affection that can be termed passionate or sensual. Love, tender, longsuffering, patient, forbearing, compassionate, optimistic, hopeful, believing, faithful, constant, honest, truthful, beauteous in purity, is the loving countenance of Divinity turned forever toward Her creatures. To live, move, and have one's being in God means daily life made progressively at-one with the Good that is Love and the Love that is Truth. As there is but one God there is but one love. Therefore the same quality of love should be exchanged between God's children, or ideas, as

is offered by the worshipping, adoring heart to the creative Love called God. The eternal Justice and the everlasting Love are one. The essence of divine Justice is that redemptive mercy and compassion which sustains the eternal law of cause and effect, yet affirms that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Its discipline has forever as its sole end the regeneration and salvation of the sinner. The divine Love is ever united to the eternal Justice, which pardons only as sin is forsaken, and is ever merciful and tenderly solicitous toward the penitential and ascending heart of the wrong-doer honestly turning from its error. The exquisite commingling of the love that is just and the justice that is loving in the words and acts of the Teacher of Palestine reveal to men that intermediate and scientific mastery of Love, which should reveal to the mind of Christendom the perverted sense that Athanasius, Calvin and Edwards got of the eternal justice of the Godhead. This same humanized sense of cold, heartless, cruel justice, minus the saving love element, has for ages

given a false and literal interpretation to the Pauline philosophy and is responsible for the wholesale removal of the Johannean love-interpretation from the superstructure of Christ's teachings and religion. A perverted sense of reverence and a sentimentality as offensive as it is weak, would have men believe that every attempt to understand the nature of God must end in pitiful failure. When the Christian Bible commands man to acquaint himself with God and be at peace, when it is remembered that the Founder of the religion that is destined to become universal among the races on earth said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," and straightway promised that the Spirit of Truth would come into the world to abide in it as a perpetual Comforter, Healer, and Saviour, wherein consists the egotism of the man or woman who says that the only salvation is in the definite understanding of the nature of God? The ancient and outworn hallucination that God dwells in a universe of His own apart from the daily affairs of life, is fast passing away,

and the immanent God is being understood as the everpresence, omnipotence, and omniscience of Life, Truth, and Love. This three-fold and united Principle of being, is to be utilized as the eliminator of sin, the healer of disease, and the destroyer of death. Man must find his true selfhood in Love, for God being his Ego, or Creator, is at once the essence of his nature, the origin of his identity, and the ultimate of his immortal existence. Love is termed the universal instinct, but is the love here referred to mutable or immutable, passionate or pure, physical, corporeal, and material or metaphysical, incorporeal, and immaterial? Is it changeable, capricious, losing itself in personal animosity, hatred, and oftentimes murder? Or is it synonymous with that Love that is everlastingly patient and forever forgiving? The traditional theologies and dogmas of the religious systems of the world have been made increasingly mystical and far-fetched. They have thus bewildered the minds which they should have enlightened, and alienated the heart-love that should

have been enlisted in the love of God and in the establishment of loving fellowship among the men and women of earth. Therefore, the majority of the people of earth have had presented to their minds such an unlovable God, or heavenly Father, and such an intensely unreasonable and cruel scheme of salvation, that human love with all its materialism and limitation has been depended upon and perpetuated even while recognized as containing within itself the primal elements of earthly discord and human woe. Truly speaking, love *is* the universal instinct. It is the poetry of life and each line is ever new. But this universal instinct is that supersensual instinct which in itself can be termed spiritual intuition. It enables us to behold the face of the Father, purifies our hearts, enlarges the scope of the mind, enhances the mental faculties, spiritualizes joy, clarifies emotion, gives poise to enthusiasm, and poetic ascension to thought. For personality it gives impersonality; for human greed, avarice, and selfishness it begets the creative and expanding genius of philanthropy, unselfish-

ness, and tender ministry; it is the universal language of the heart; it opens the windows of the soul to the light of faith, chastity, and constancy; it tells man of the one universal nature expressing itself through the universe; and in the character of his brother and sister, it promotes fellowship, increases hospitality, findeth its own in another's good, mourns with those who mourn, weeps with those who weep, rejoices with those who conquer, and finds exquisite delight in rejoicing in the victories, as well as sympathizing with the defeats of the sons and daughters of earth. It speaks clearest to the purified heart. As the telescope reveals an infinite number of worlds beyond the vision of the naked eye, as the finer instruments tell of a universe of sound beneath the hearing of the natural ear, so this love reveals to the pure in heart an infinitude of worlds and a Heaven of harmonies above the earth-vision of that misguided instinct and personal sense so often confounded with love. Love lives and increases her store by giving. Her genius is in sharing all that she possesses and all

that she is. Love is reciprocal. Love gives without thinking of return. Love is honest and patient, though all about her be faithless, dishonest, and turbulent. Love knows how to wait, and because she waits trustingly and fearlessly she receives the victor's crown as queen of the divine graces. Love is divinely impartial; her fragrance, like that of the lily-of-the-valley, is begotten oft-times from life's shadows rather than from its sunshine. Love exhales the aroma of chaste affection because she is incorporeally existent as mind, not in any way allied to matter or materialism. This love glorified the passion of Jesus and sustained his magnificent self-offering. Love defines true instinct as the evidence and testimony of the spiritual senses, forever existing as the intuitive consciousness of the divine origin of man. Apart from the common walks of earthly living she moves with stately step; reaching down helpfully and with a humanity of feeling akin to parental sympathy, she penetrates the minutiae of human affairs, and forever leads the way, saying to earth's weary

hearts, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Above the earth-fogs of fleshly desire she abides in her own atmosphere of white light. Like the sweet cuddling babe at the mother's breast, love is guileless and clings to its object as the satisfied child nestles in its mother's protecting arms. Love believeth all things and judgeth justly with the same sweet trust that characterizes the just estimate peculiar to the little child. She is as strong, and careful, and far-seeing as the protecting devotion of a father, and as watchful, tender, and long-suffering as the characteristic sympathy of a faithful mother. Like a youth she knows no defeat, contemplates none but noble ideals, and rejoices in the abandon peculiar to ideal affection, which because of its purity and nobility is as free as the soaring bird. Innocent and chaste, she is as constant and enduring as are the first vows of pure love characteristic of the June days of maidenhood. Love recognizes neither time, space, nor outward separation. She multiplies joys, displaces friction and discord with harmony, judges not by appear-

ances but judges righteous judgment, tempers zeal with moderation, and tones down impatience with longsuffering and intelligent conservatism. Love reveals the sage in the child-mind, and uncovers the childlike in the mature. Her hands lay hold of the flaming sword, still gleaming in the hand of the angel which guards the gateway to Paradise, and taking by the hand this sentinel of the Spirit, re-enters with her the Garden of Eden advancing along the highway of the Resurrection.

II.

Love is the fulfilling of the law.—*Jesus.*

THE centre and circumference, the corner-stone, foundation, and superstructure of all being is love. Love is the ultimate of existence; the atmosphere of Heaven; the principle of brotherhood; the essence of real character; the basis of all fellowship and fraternity. It is the divine Principle of universal creation; the golden cord which binds all

society together. The inspiration of love displaces discord with peace. It begets hope, faith, optimism, calm, sober judgment, tenderness, patience, compassion, tolerance, and the ministry of unselfishness. The touch of love gives grandeur to the common things of life and unites the heart of man with the music of the spheres. Love is the supreme end of all progression; the Promised Land of spiritual affection; the Eden of the heart and the Paradise of earth's famished affections. Love is born of Spirit, not sense. It attaches itself to soul, to character, and to the divine realism. It is not based upon or born of corporeality, mere personal physique, or materialism. The revelation of love to individual consciousness is synonymous with the unfolding of the divine nature within. Love constitutes the correlated elements of the divine Father and Mother, God. In it is to be found the fulfilment or completion of all law. Morality, ideality, and spirituality are all states and stages of consciousness, individually and separately approaching the noontide glory of love.

Love is more than a mood. It is a state of being, yea the original and primitive state of being in at-one-ment with God. Love includes and begets sympathy, loving-kindness, pity, mercy, and pure affection. Love is God's nature universally and impartially existent. All of life's paths, roads, and highways lead to love. Love is not a mere sentiment, nor is it an ecstatic state of human consciousness allied to passion and materialism. Love appears as materialism disappears. Love increases as mere personal attachment and human personality decrease. Love manifests itself in its own kind. Its true genius is in reciprocity. It increases only as it shares itself and multiplieth and increaseth in proportion to the blessings that it showers upon the race. Love is no inoperative, stagnant, and neutral state of thought, but is synonymous with the divine enthusiasm, believing that it is in God and God is in it. All lovers of justice, honesty, purity, brotherhood and righteousness are lovers of God. The love element in life is the God element. Without it life is cold, crystalized, and void

of poetry, idealism, and true humanitarianism. Love is a ladder reaching from earth to Heaven, from sense to Soul, and from humanity to divinity. Love can afford to be patient, longsuffering, and hopeful, because it is the beginning and end of all being and the law of universal attraction to the sons of men. Love is in itself the greatest rebuke to selfishness, human greed and cruelty. Through the purification of the mind the bestial or animal elements are expunged and thought naturally blends with Pure Mind, the omniscient Ruler of the universe. This purification or purgation of mentality ushers consciousness into the inner sanctuary of being, and love is revealed; hence progressively realized. Love bids man to be consistent with his fellows independent of any treatment he may receive from them. Love brings order out of chaos and harmony out of discord. Not that these elements of error can change their characteristics, but because love displaces the unreal and temporal with the real and establishes the government of Good. Love takes note of little things. Its appre-

ciation is based on quality and motive rather than quantity and degree. Small gifts lovingly given and little everyday common kindnesses please love most. Love looks for the good everywhere and under all conditions and finds it. It so intensifies the normal elements of mental perspicuity that it is expert in analyzing, classifying, dissecting, and diagnosing thought. Love understands without the necessity of either speech or human acquaintance. Love's observation is that of the sage, old and wise in the ways of God, while at the same time perhaps young in the ways of the world. Love reveals the plan of the universe, the nature of God, and the character of man at a single glance. It is the common speech of all human experience and can be called the universal language of character. All peoples, races, climes and individuals understand it without the necessity of interpreter or translator, in proportion to their purity of heart and righteousness of character. Love is manhood's crown and woman's diadem. Love's instincts are forgiveness, unselfishness, hu-

mility, chastity, moral courage, and infinite progression. It baptises all who embrace it in the pure fountain of fellowship. One of love's strongest characteristics is resident in the power of example. A character consistently and symmetrically illuminated by love possesses a glory all its own, and encourages and inspires with the loftiest aspirations known to the human heart all who come into perpetual or occasional contact with it. A life lived within the boundaries of the land of love is a city set on a hill which cannot be hid. Such a character readily gains access to the hearts of men and becomes the trusted receptacle of their confidences, heart secrets, and heretofore unspoken hopes. Because true love understands individual relationship and is impartial, supersensual, and poised, it knows no such thing as jealousy, envy, human ambition, or avarice. A nature breathing forth love in kind deeds and tender words knows no such thing as selfishness, for its fragrance is sent forth as meekly as that of the violet, and, like the lily, it is clothed by God.

PURITY.

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God,—
Jesus.

THE celestial heights of individual being are forever luminous in the sunshine of a pure mind. Purity is the *summum bonum* of character. Chastity of mind opens the doors of the kingdom of Heaven to the thought of man. The purification of mentality through the baptisms of Spirit cleanses the atmosphere of consciousness, enables mind to blend with the harmony of the universe and reveals the grandeur of ideal manhood and womanhood. Purity is Heaven's law. The reign of righteousness, refinement, culture, guilelessness, meekness, childlikeness, trust, faith, unselfishness, sincerity and gentleness are all the direct products and component parts of the mind that is pure. When Jesus said "except ye be converted, and become

as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven," it is noticeably beautiful to realize that he set up as the standard of manly and womanly attainment the type of character that is invariably manifested by not merely a child, but a little child.

The innocence and sweetness of the mind of the little child is not the manifestation of either ignorance or latent human mind. Rather is it a state of thought and living which lives, moves, and has its being in the pure atmosphere of Soul. It accepts the provision made for its life and happiness by its parents as a matter of course. It lives for the day. Its trust is exalting to behold. In its own little thought the universe was made for it and it for the universe. It hears the birds sing and recognizes in the song God's direct message. It plays in the sunshine and enjoys the fragrance of the flowers as one consciously having dominion over all things. It is meek and does not know it; unselfish and takes no account of it; shares its possessions and gifts with its playmate all un-

conscious of so-called rights of personal possession. Instinctively pure and chaste, it manifests no false sense and has no need of so-called modesty.. There is nothing to hide, nothing to be ashamed of. If naked it knows it not. If clothed it claims no greater purity therefrom. Eden's atmosphere is congenial to this little life. To it there is no sin, no human duplicity, no rupture of brotherhood, no false sense to be guarded against, no worrying thought for the provisions of the flesh, no doubts for the unlived to-morrow, no gloomy retrospection and no morbid introspection. Life appears to it as one everlasting and joyous now, filled with the affluence and lovingkindness of an everpresent father. The child heart is naturally sincere, frank, honest, trusting and hopeful. It enters into its dominion over all things with that divine satisfaction which marks the possession of conscious kingly origin. Of such is the kingdom of Heaven.

How blessed it is to remember that Jesus said that the angel faces of such as these forever behold

the face of the Father in Heaven. These angels are the thoughts so conspicuously resident in the child heart. Thus Jesus turned the attention of the world to the life of the little child. Furthermore, to the heart of the child life is not only real but earnest. The element of pleasure and the exchange of gifts and enjoyments, constitute the chief element in child life, and in this we have one of the divine prophecies relating to the heavenly kingdom,—“They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.” In the common belief among children that the chief end of life is enjoyment and pleasure abides the greatest truth of the spiritual world. The majesty of the divine plan is based upon the great truth that man, male and female, has dominion over all things; that spiritual bliss, immortality, pleasures, and the everlasting enjoyment of infinite Life constitute the only legitimate and real existence. True progress is always pleasureable and consists of the harmonious unfolding of the eternal verities

In this progress beauty, sublimity, perfection, infinite individuality in its multitudinous objects of beauteous creation, the everlasting glory of the universe and the dominion of the sons and daughters of God, constitute the very essence of eternal life. Herein is fulfilled the Scripture, "We all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." As the angel face of childlikeness forever beholds the face of the Father in Heaven, receives and comprehends on an ascending scale the continuance of infinite good and eternal love, it forever advances along the highways of the eternal from age to age, even unto that period when time is no more and the infinitude of being is entered upon.

One of the most beautiful characteristics of a little child is its instinctive disposition to nestle in the arms of its mother. Here it feels safe from all danger, secure from every ill. A kiss takes away its sense of pain. A look, a word, a nod, a pet name restores to it the peace of the universe, and

then, fresh with the strength gained from its repose in the mother-arms, it again takes up its little tasks and goes on its way rejoicing. If out of harmony with its mother it feels no peace. If in harmony it knows no fear. To trust and not be afraid is natural to it. To look forward rather than backward is instinctive. Therefore when Jesus exalted above everything else the character and nature of the little child he elevated the highest manifestation of the divine idea. Thus we are brought face to face with the fact that youth must advance to the symmetry and maturity of mind represented by such childlikeness. Age and so-called human maturity of mind must come back, or better, rise toward the power and grandeur of this same childlikeness. In it there is nothing that is crude, infantile, or weak; no element of ignorance, fear, or superstition abides therein; no craftiness, plotting, dishonesty, passion or materialism; nothing that shocks the highest instincts, aspirations and ideals. When we look such mind-elements squarely in the face we are dazzled by

their brightness, but at the same time we see that they possess the naturalness of divinity and are therefore normal, and hence are the legitimate heritage of us all.

Sage and philosopher, scientist and teacher, interpreter and scribe, scholastic and king, ruler and wise man, in one united company shall sit at the feet of that type of mind which is represented by the little child and learn the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven. Then shall the Holy Spirit say unto them, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven;" except ye enter into the conscious possession of purity, chastity, and guilelessness ye are forever debarred from knowing God's eternal plan of life and the true nature of the infinite omniscience.

Oh, men and women, ye who look from the dazzling heights of worldly attainment, sensual existence, and materialism, and in the sober and aspiring moments which come amid the excesses of human existence, who long for the innocence

and freedom of the little child, know that this coveted possession, this longed-for pearl of great price, is within your reach. Turn from sense to Soul, from matter to Mind, from body to the infinite incorporeal Spirit, the principle of all that is beautiful, pure, and perfect, and therein recognize the infinite possibilities of your own nature. Pent up, hidden beneath the debris of mortal and human thought; closed in by your walls of petty jealousy, world-worship and false pleasure, lives this child-heart waiting and longing for adoption. Remember that the greatest friend of man, who offered himself for the salvation of all who cultivated false pleasures and material excesses, had as the basis of his earth mission and compassionate ministry the spirit of that ancient Hebrew utterance, "Though thy sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." The beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God," begins with a benediction and ends with a divine declaration. The pure in heart are blest because they are pure in heart. Purity, chastity, and sinlessness of

thought are their own reward. Ponder the deep significance of the beatitude. As the result of being pure in heart, mind, or consciousness, as the direct outcome of childlikeness, chastity, loving-kindness, and honesty, the possessor of these graces of the mind shall see, recognize, not only apprehend but comprehend, yea enter into conscious communion with, the eternal Father and Mother, God, Creator and Sustainer of the universe. When Isaiah in his inspirational picture of the Heavenly estate of man said,

“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
The calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together,”

he did not add, and a king shall lead them, nor did he promise the rule of mightiness or egotistical selfhood, but said, “And a little child shall lead them.” So in life's journey from sense to Soul, from earth to Heaven, in the resurrection through which every earnest heart goes daily, the progressive acquisition of purity and chastity of thought registers the ratio of scientific progress Godward.

Purity of thought reveals the Eden of God's divine plan. It releases the pent-up and restricted mental faculties, gives vigor, intellectuality, courage, power, spiritual force, manly tenderness and chaste affection to manhood; to womanhood it gives strength, originality, the possession of divine individuality, hope, mental perspicuity, and in a conspicuous degree endows her with the spiritual essence of the divine nature. Through purity and chastity of thought the male and female of God's creation appear; brotherhood is understood; friendship is sanctified; right friendship revealed; the eternal glory of individual love understood, the mystery of the resurrection state is solved, and the peace which passeth understanding makes luminous with beatific presence Christ's beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

COMPASSION.

"No one thing," wrote Henry Ward Beecher, "does human life need more than a kind consideration of men's faults. Every one sins; every one needs forbearance. Their own imperfections should teach men to be merciful. God is merciful because He is perfect. As men grow toward the divine they become gentle, forgiving, compassionate. The absence of a merciful spirit is evidence of the want of true holiness. A soul that has really entered into the life of Christ carries in itself a store of enrichment and a cordial for helpless souls around it." Do we who profess to bear aloft the Christ standard of conduct sufficiently ponder the heart-searching, love-beggetting nature of the religion of our Master, its broad humanity, tolerant forbearance, temperate procedure, divine compassion, merciful, yet exact justice and philan-

thropy? It truly has its just and radical interpretation, but too long has this aspect of the Gospels been made the cardinal and only interpretation of the simple message of the Nazarene. Above all else it should be remembered that Jesus spoke from the depths of a humanly divine heart. Flesh of our flesh, he knew by the eternal law of sympathy what was in the heart of man, both good and bad, divine and human, strong and weak. He knew the temptations of the human mind, for never lived there a heart that sympathized more deeply and tenderly with sin-laden humanity than the over-flowing heart of the Galilean teacher. His enemies really paid him the grandest tribute he ever received when they scornfully said, "he was the friend of sinners." Never was there a character more above worldliness and impurity than his. Much of the time it must have meant physical and mental anguish for a man as sensitive as he was, to be so constantly at work among the depraved, the sick, and the sorrowing. Surely he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

He was divinely heroic, supremely unselfish, and tender in the extreme. He always looked on both sides of all questions in which motive, and the salvation of a character, were involved. Remembering his parable of the prodigal son, and of the two debtors, his divinely compassionate treatment of the penitent Magdalene, his words to the adulterous woman, and lastly his declaration that the harlots would enter the kingdom of Heaven before the self-righteous Pharisees, can we afford to do less in life than did the world's most scientific and successful reformer and religious teacher? In no one of the mentioned parables or instances did Jesus ever excuse guilt, or even suggest that the penalty of sin could be removed until suffering had cancelled the error. He based all his declarations of forgiveness and absolution upon the sincere penitence and sorrow for wrong-doing that his spiritualized and compassionate eye detected surging to the surface of the sinner's thought. Or, perchance he perceived its first faint beams shining through the dark clouds of depravity and impurity, as one

sees the first faint lights of a ship as it nears the home harbor after months of tossing upon the stormy waves of foreign seas. Did he close his eyes to this faint struggling ray? Was he blind to its worth because its material and evil surroundings in the still evil character almost hid its real nature and value? Did he pass it by to look for greater evidence of reformation in some other character? No. He first valued it, then he gently nurtured it and tenderly cultivated it as the florist does a specially delicate and tender plant; he protected it as the little seedling of virtue, purity, manhood, womanhood,—yea, divinity; he carefully and patiently removed from about its gradual growth the hard, coarse soil of error that mentally surrounded it, and by the life-giving rays of divine Love reflected by him, it steadily grew into larger and nobler character, till at last the sorrow for wrong-doing, and the first faint love for the good and pure, bloomed into the celestial beauty of a Christ-like life. Jesus let the past bury its dead. Never did he taunt the honest penitent, the re-

formed prodigal or Magdalene with even a hint or suggestion of the days that were past, or the error that had been seen and honestly repented of through pangs unspeakable. Let us frankly examine our hearts, our methods, ways, and means, and honestly ask ourselves if we follow his example, and let the dead past of error bury its dead when genuine reformation has followed repentance. Do we blot out the dark past of the erring careers of our friends and enemies, and know and love them with heartfelt love and trust as they tread the safe and upward pathway of true living? After a friend apologizes for wrong-doing should a man still force upon him stern condemnation? Should he enumerate all his neighbor's faults to him every time some one of them happens to force him to put into practice just a small portion of the teaching of Jesus, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you?" Do not men often let the one cardinal fault or weak point of an otherwise noble and well-developed character, blind them to the ninety and nine noble and beautiful traits? In

short, are we not theoretically followers of Jesus in these true methods of dealing with our fellows, and practically doers of things that contradict alike the spirit of Christ, and the religion of love? Religion is one. It is simply spiritual goodness. It is love lived. It is that which interprets the deep things of the Spirit to the men and the women of this world, whose Gethsemane and Calvary experiences have so purified and inspired their hearts that they no longer estimate bliss, health, and joy from a material basis, but from the foundation of spirituality. The religion of Love asks of each disciple spiritual consistency. Do we live the Golden Rule? Do we sincerely love those whom we know do not love us? Do we not often love in the ratio that we find we are loved, and in many instances wait to find that we are first loved before we even allow ourselves to recognize the worth of a character or heart that so far has made known no affection for us? This is, of course, searching self-questioning, but unless the motive-springs of being are right, the whole mechanism of character is

perpetually out of order, and we lack the ability to retain friends and lose enemies by loving them. Love reflecting the divine principle of being is the essence of the allied graces—compassion, tolerance, and patience. These three constitute a holy alliance, and are indispensable to a consistent and Christian character. A narrow-minded person is invariably intolerant, cruel, abstractly just rather than lovingly and mercifully exact. Intelligent and spiritual loyalty to God—Good, as Principle,—always includes and involves loyalty to all true representatives of the truth on earth. Blind, unthinking, and miscalled loyalty to personality, or human opinion, creates disloyalty to both God and His idea—man. If thought is governed by God it follows scientifically that loyalty to every honest and spiritual individual becomes an inevitable sequence. And to that individual man or woman who reflects in the greatest degree the Christ image, will be given the supreme loyalty, because such love begets a discipleship that knows neither limit of time nor of numbers, and that

neither earth nor hell can discourage or destroy. In love to and for God is included love for our fellowmen, bond and free, Gentile and believer, great and humble, rich and poor. Love evolves patience, forbearance, tolerance, pity, mercy, compassion, and radicalism in metaphysical ideas of life; it develops judgment that is righteous rather than judgment by appearances, lofty hope, faith and optimism, deep and strong faith in the power of divine Love and Good to reach even the lowest of earth's creatures, spiritual serenity, calm strength, tenderness and selflessness.

“ Judge not hastily of others
But thine own salvation mind;
Nor be lynx-eyed to thy brother's,
To thine own offences blind;
God alone discerns thine own
And the hearts of all mankind.”

Of earth's weary ones the Spirit asketh, Does your heart yearn for the Life divine? Does it cry for a deeper insight into the mysteries of being? Does human life promise vastly more than it gives? Have shattered hopes and wounded aspirations

formed clouds of despair that have hidden from view the fondest hopes of earthly existence? Has bodily disease discouraged you in your efforts to evolve the ideal life? Have struggle, poverty, gloom, depression, the loss of loved ones and the coldness and indifference of the world hardened your nature? Through the discipline of life has the heart been softened by its chastisements, or made weary by the experiences that you have been wrongly taught were God-sent? Has the great law of spiritual cause and effect been learned and understood, and have you found the great truth that suffering is either self-inflicted, or comes through ignorant disobedience of the eternal laws of Good? If you wish to be whole, and thus to heal the wounds so common to the heart of humanity, there is but one panacea, one curative element and healing balm—"the mind of the Master,"

Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day

Across the mournful marbles play;
Who hath not learned in hours of faith,
The truth, to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever Lord of death
And love can never lose its own.

THE LESSON OF SUFFERING.

TEXT: Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.—*Psalms 30:5*.

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

—*James 2:10*.

THE lessons taught by earth-shadows, sorrows, and losses are blessings in disguise. The heart-breakings of human existence are but the birth-throes of the life divine. Like discordant notes that break the harmony of music, earthly troubles are the jarring discords that little by little, or perchance abruptly, turn us to the eternal law of God, whose love leads and guides all careers from sense to Soul, from sorrow to joy, and to that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

Human suffering, strictly speaking, is not a part of the divine plan, yet if its lessons are rightly learned it shows man the wisdom and safety of

conforming to the eternal law of Spirit and righteousness.

In the midst of human prosperity, bodily health, and social enjoyment, most people give little thought to the deep things of the Spirit. Sailing with tide and wind both favorable, we find it hard to picture the hardships that come when tide and wind are both against us. Rude is the awakening that mortals experience when the dream of listless existence is broken. Sharp are the thorns that stir to waking the sleepers in the world of materialism and selfishness.

Suffering of mind and body are like fog-signals along the sea-coast, that warn men of danger and reveal the presence of the hidden reef and rocky shore. They are alarms that tell us that we are either wilfully or unknowingly disobeying the law of life, or are ignorantly saying amen to certain false beliefs of the human mind, by believing that suffering is divinely ordained.

Sorrow, like pain, makes us love and appreciate peace, joy, and happiness in an enlarged way.

But if the lesson of continued earthly discord fails to set our thoughts to work in new or higher ways, we have not yet learned its deep lesson. Earthly woe is often perpetuated because it is erroneously believed that God afflicts His creatures for some good and wise purpose.

Departure from the laws of musical harmony ushers the student at once into the realm of discord, which to an ear attuned to the beauty of harmony, creates positive and continued suffering. Departure from the scientific lines of procedure in mathematics leads the scholar at once into the world of error and mistakes. In both instances the only deliverance from the discords found through the departures, is for the student and scholar to leave the realm of wrong and error, and come into conformity with, and abide by, the law of harmony and mathematics. Would it be rational or scientific to assert that the principle of these two sciences causes, or is responsible for, the discord experienced because of departure from its guidance?

So it is with earth's dark places and life's troubles. All are but the workings of the false notes and errors of the human mind, which little by little and step by step set us to asking where and what is truth? Be it remembered that God "doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

Sorrow is disciplinary in the fullest sense; so is a continuation of discords on the piano and a series of errors in a bookkeeper's trial balance. Popular misuse greatly abuses the words, "God's will" and "law," and makes them cover not only a multitude of sins, but a million mistakes that directly inflict their own penalty under the unchanging laws of cause and effect.

Wrong acts are but the product of wrong thoughts, and unless evil thinking gradually gives place to right thinking, man will not live in harmony with the divine will, nor cease to look upon self-inflicted suffering as God-sent. Ignorance of the fact that we are not in accord with the laws of divine Mind, or good motives while there is wrong

living, by no means spare us the mental or bodily torment and pain that comes from broken laws nor relieve us from the self-evolved suffering of the latent human thought.

Thus it is that children and oftentimes the best people that we know suffer most. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," i.e., he who performs a difficult problem correctly and blunders at the last, makes a failure, so far as the correct answer is concerned. So it is in life, if we are more alive to the higher life than our neighbor, and yet have not passed the line where we learn that suffering exists because of our ignorance of the divine law of life, we shall probably suffer more keenly than the lover of sin, for we are more sensitive to wrong, and our despair adds to our cup.

There is one phase of human misery that deserves *marked exception* to this general idea of the causes and lessons of trouble, namely, the suffering of the just for the unjust, all the sorrows that seem forced into human lives through no fault or

choice of their own. He who lived as never other man lived, the founder of the highest system of ethics that the world has ever known, suffered most from the sins of others. He gave his benediction to this "Gospel of suffering," saying: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

Like the rose that when trampled upon emits the sweetest perfume, so doth the heart most disappointed and torn, shed abroad upon humanity the life-giving fragrance of trust, patience, philanthropy, and compassionate love. They who suffer most love most, and they who have most to bear from the shortcomings of their fellows soonest see that even the gold of human character affords not the fulness of spiritual peace. Thus they turn at length to divine Love "in whom we live, and move, and have our being." Then peace descends,

the silver of life's cloud is seen, the glory of God's sunlight bursts through the gray clouds of grief, and we thank the Eternal for the rod and the chastening, for it was the Angel in disguise to lift us heavenward.

O ye who suffer wrong
Fear not and be ye strong,
For the furnace of affliction,
And the anguish of contrition
Are flames of cleansing purity,
And friends to Heaven's art.

It is the inspiration and strength gained in life's Gethsemanes that enables us to ascend our Calvary and bear our cross. It is under the shadows of this cross that we gain the power to say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Again, it is the courage and Christly resignation born of crucifixion in company with and by the side of wrong-doers, that makes men able to see that at length the purified and reformed will enter Paradise with the godly. This is the grandeur of Love's plan of universal salva-

tion. So take fresh courage, ye whose sky is leaden, whose path is thorny.

Let not sorrow harden the heart nor quench love's power in your life, but let it show the nothingness of existence apart from God's own plan, and let it be the highway to the City of thy God. Let no earthly ill bring forth in your heart doubt of God as compassionate Love, for He never sends trouble, but is man's only salvation from sin, suffering, sickness, and death. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." The eternal law that sin or ignorance brings suffering is the divine chastening that proves God's love for His creation, for what would otherwise turn us from wrong to God? And this scourging must needs come ere we are sufficiently purified to be received of the one God.

When selfishness, passion, hate, jealousy, and materialism cease to be a part of temporal man's mental moods, then shall he begin to rise out of the realm of earthly suffering, and coming into oneness with divine Mind he shall reflect the har-

mony, joy, and immortality of life "hid with Christ in God." Then can he sing,—

. "I hold it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

Has your life been fraught with continued struggle? Despair not; for out of it will come the gold of strong character and trust in God. Has sorrow and loss of dear ones strewn your life-path with thorns, and kept the altar-fire of your love alive with the flame of heart-pangs? Fear not, the "everlasting arms" are around and beneath you. Love will still every longing, give you your own once more, and reveal their undying spiritual identity. Then as the mists of matter disperse will you see the celestial peaks of the mountains of God, and the City of Life, not by or through the death of the body, but by the spiritual understanding of eternal life.

FRIENDSHIP.

“ I call you no longer servants but friends, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth.” — *Jesus*.

HARMONIOUS relationship is synonymous with scientific being. For ages religionists, philosophers, scientists, and idealists have labored to ascertain the real and ultimate relationship between individuals under the law of God. In large degree the solution of this great problem has remained like a sphinx of the desert,—silent, uninterpreted, mystical. Life under all conditions is progressive. Progress involves new views, and the enlargement and expansion of all true relationship. As personality, the temperamental characteristics of the person, is outgrown through the operation of unfolding individuality, man comes consciously into scientific relationship with both God and his fellows. The divine Mind including within itself

all gender, but still remaining one, is the universal Ego of universal man—male and female. Therefore as individuals through mental processes of spiritual evolution come understandingly into union with the divine Nature, they also enter into scientific relationship with one another. This is the divine grandeur of the deific plan, that the revelation of God includes the revelation of man in his true character and perfection. As divine Mind is infinite so the universal expression of this Mind in the universe and man is infinite. Hence infinite Individuality as Cause is expressed through infinite individualities as effect. Recognizing this law of being Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I and my Father are one." The oneness of God includes the essential oneness of man under the law of brotherhood, fellowship, and individual relationship. The sweetness, poetry, and idealism of life proceed from symmetrical relationship understandingly discerned through spiritual law. In the eternal scheme of creation there is no monotony, no dull repetition. Each moment

hour, day, and epoch is new to itself. Each successive mountain top of vision exceeds in beauty and grandeur the last. Infinite life involves infinite progression. Infinite progression signifies the eternal unfolding of infinite phenomena, and the spiritual capacity of man to reveal the image and likeness of God in conscious possession of dominion over all things. The eternal Omniscience precludes the possibility of a crude, incomplete, or imperfect creation. In all periods of the world's history certain impersonal ideals have been held as synonyms of Deity. It can be truly said that the sum total of the highest thoughts of the ages represents the universal idea of the divine character. The ruling conception of God and His laws governs the character of every period of human history. The erroneous belief that men can come into right relationship with God while ignoring the privileges and duties of scientific relationship with their fellows, the ideas of God is being rapidly relegated to the realm of designated error. The greatest friend to the best interests of the human

race sanctified friendship when he said to his students and followers: "I call you no longer servants but friends, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth." He addressed them thus toward the close of his life's ministry, at a time when he was nearer to them and they to him than ever before. When they received from him this blessed appellation they had entered deeply into his life, and his spirit largely possessed theirs. Therefore Jesus crowned this relationship with jewels rare, among which confidence, trust, constancy, ministry, unselfishness, purity, honesty, protection, and meekness shine conspicuously.

True friendship is a sanctified state. Its gates cannot be stormed nor its walls scaled. It is an impregnable fortress to all who enter its hallowed domains, yet a luminous highway leads to its portals, and "a wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein." Within its precincts nothing can abide that worketh abomination or maketh a lie. It is as lofty as the heavens. It has the silent dignity of the everlasting hills; the protection of

life's holy of holies ; the luminous light of the city that lieth four square ; the glory and purity of the real Eden. Real friendship is a condition invisible to personal sense testimony. The selfish mind knows it not and materialism stands with face turned from it. Friendship should be common but never commonplace. Its genuineness is based upon spiritual discernment and worth. Its four square walls and gates of pearl are based on foundations of reciprocity, unselfish love and purity.

A man's acquaintances are not necessarily his friends. Friendship is essentially dignified. Inasmuch as it is the mutual recognition of the traits which constitute true character it is capable of divine expansion and progressive unfoldment. Honesty is the basis of friendship. Purity, unselfishness, and ministering love form its superstructure, and spiritual communion the keystone of its arch of promise. A true friend is not only a ministering angel, but an individual to be ministered unto. The essence of friendship is the inter-

change of common hopes, ideals, and spiritual longings. Its real selfhood is to be found in co-operation. The infinitude of individuality precludes the possibility of monotonous friendship, for the eternal plan of progression makes character fresh and interesting each succeeding day. As the varied blendings of sound express the infinite possibilities of musical harmony, so one's friends play their parts in the divine drama of life and make up the music of one's life.

There is a passion that is in no wise related to materialism or physical corporeality, nor is it an earth sense. It is the divine passion of sinless humanhood which mounts as on wings of eagles and in its ascending flight permeates the entire nature with holy zeal, spiritual affection, and lovingkindness. It has a passionate love for all that is good and pure and beautiful. To it the rarest creations of Eden are those lives which manifest the glory of the divine plan. This spiritual sense thinks of thoughts rather than things; cultivates ideals rather than persons, and glories in individ-

uality as opposed to the limitations of the human mind. The soul, or spiritual sense recognizes its own. One phase of friendship is the result of long mutual acquaintance, exchange of ideas, and allied experiences. Another phase of friendship, and perhaps the one that most conspicuously bears the imprint of divine destiny is that friendship that we recognize as established after an individual has come into our lives or environment, when in perhaps the first frank conversation it is understood that all unknown to ourselves, life and its experiences have been fitting both natures for that hour of friendship's nativity.

As personality is lost and individuality is thereby found, characters not only rise upward and Godward, but gravitate toward such other natures as are living on the same plane. As in chemistry similar elements blend, and uniting make one, so in the resurrection periods of human consciousness friends are found, enemies lost, and the sweet harmonies of being are won. How often in some great crisis of life, when the heart is bowed and

burdened with its grief, perchance taking no one into its confidence through a sense of duty, loyalty, or isolation, but communing alone with God as its only consoler, and healer, there comes into the heart's inner courts a friend. This friend comes without the formality of an introduction. Humanly a stranger, divinely a helper. He perceives the struggle; he has passed through it all before. A glance, a word, a tender act tears aside the thin veil of non-acquaintance, and the sublime dignity of chaste friendship is recognized by the sufferer and the angel visitant alike. Herein exists one of the sweetest evidences of the protecting care of the eternal Love. Verily in such a case is the Scripture fulfilled, "He will give His angels charge concerning thee . . . lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Into such experiences, and behind the scenes of human life they are legion, no vulgar familiarity can enter, nor is there any element within out of which contempt can be evolved. They are from the beginning transcendental, pure, divine, reciprocal. They represent the operation

of that law of brotherhood, mutual ministry and protection, which engirdles the entire plan of existence, as the rainbow arches the heavens. In the hour of darkness it illumines. In the time of loneliness it comforts. When the soul seems most alone it reveals the mediatorial office of man or of woman. When the tomb of agony, disappointment, and cruelty seems to claim its victim, and against the door is rolled the great stone of human indifference and selfishness, it is the lightning flash of divine love which saith to the heart, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, for behold at the crucial hour there shall appear knocking at the door of thy life a friend."

God is universal, impartial Love. As men and women rise into the conscious possession of their spirituality they reflect the elements of the divine Mind. Therefore friendship recognizing as it must individuality, impartiality, and supersensual existence, must show forth the beatific presence of universal Love. Friendship is a thing of character. Its essential elements include the divine graces.

Emerson has said that a friend is one in whose presence we can think aloud. A friend who understands makes no merely personal demands, because he knows that he has from his friend trust, confidence, love.

The take-it-for-granted spirit, i.e., human imposition or selfishness, is a misnomer in true friendship, for its reciprocal character precludes the possibility of selfishness. A friend is not something to be owned and used, but is one through whom the Eternal speaks; one whose example is potent in our lives; one in whom the divine image and likeness of God is made manifest. Friendship is a God-ordained estate, not an institution, nor the product of mere personal attachment. Personality has virtually no place in its domain. Friendship is the result of certain operative divine laws of mental congeniality and spiritual similarity. In reality we cannot personally select friends. If we are yielding our minds and lives to the activities of divine Principle, our friends are neither self-elected, self-appointed, nor personally chosen, but come to

us through the direct operation of the divine law of spiritual community and association, yea through the order of the Spirit's law of like's attraction of like.

The rights of friendship are impregnable and cannot be tampered with. As no one has a right to interfere with the individual's relationship with God, so the privileges and symmetry of friendship should be protected from human interference, jealousy and envy. Our friends tell us of the universe. They are God's mouth-pieces. We should be familiar with them only as ideas of the eternal Mind. Friendship should be a divine compact entered upon for the elevation of the race. Self-aggrandizement, personal pleasure, and selfish possession should be rigidly excluded from its portals. God's universal law of individuality and impartiality precludes the possibility of confounding true friendship with the materialistic law of so-called affinity, which would try to reverse the divine order, and dignify selfish exclusiveness with the name of friendship. Friends should approach

each other mutually conscious of the divine dignity of true manhood and womanhood. Friends never gossip. A friend will tenderly listen to the recital of another's sorrows, fears, and struggles, not because of a desire to concede to the selfish assumption that a friend is one into whose ears we are always privileged to pour our woes, but because the human heart receives comfort and strength from talking out its human misgivings and troubles. Then it is that a friend can carry out the divine motive of friendship, and comfort, encourage, and renew the hope of the one who has given him his confidence. While the greatest freedom should exist between friends, and both representatives should lovingly minister and be ministered unto, yet we have no right to assume that friends are given us that they may act as receptacles for all our woes. There are certain struggles and burdens that God will carry us through and lift us above if we go to Him. Therefore it is often wisest and best to go to the mountaintop of spiritual communion and thereby rise

above the mists, rather than first to go to the friend and burden him, and to God afterwards. There should exist a delicacy of intercourse which naturally must act as a safeguard against overburdening those who give us most love and loyalty.

PERSONALITY, IMPERSONALITY, INDIVIDUALITY.

PERSONALITY, the Latin word *persona*, says Momerie, meant primarily a mask. It is derived from *per*, through, and *sonare*, to sound. In ancient times the actors wore masks and these masks were called *personæ*, because the words sounded or were uttered through them. Then secondarily the term *persona* came to mean by a natural transition of ideas the character which any one assumed, the part which he played either on or off the stage. The *personæ* of an actor are the characters of his repertoire; the *personæ* of Mr. Irving were, for example, Charles I., Louis XI., Shylock, the Vicar of Wakefield, etc.

Personality should be distinguished from individuality. Individuality, alias real character, or the divine nature, appears as personality disap-

pears. Personality represents the sum total of human or mortal mind characteristics. It is at all times a mask hiding the real character of the individual. The temperament, moods, mental characteristics, disposition, and dominating tendencies of a nature, constitute the personality, which manifests itself in countless ways. No two personalities are wholly alike, yet what can be correctly termed the general personality of human nature, or material mentality, is made up of certain essential elements. The aggregate or sum total of these mental elements, wholly transitory and temporal in nature, constitute the dominating characteristics of the races of mankind and mark its periods of progress or retrogression. Person and personality are essentially one, yet the word person is more capable of spiritual significance than personality. The vital elements of the human or mortal mind such as selfishness, anger, hate, jealousy, pride, sensuality, dishonesty and fear are the centre and circumference of personality, and a person is one who manifests in greater or less degree these

mental elements. These component parts of personality can be subdivided as follows: subtlety, deceit, craftiness, duplicity, human policy, envy, malice, appetite, passion, self-will, egotism, self-love, self-righteousness, revenge, retaliation, self-justification, hypocrisy, indifference, haughtiness, pride, cowardice, bigotry, worldly wisdom, scholasticism, superstition, mental domination, love of leadership, ambition and human diplomacy. The constant action of these thoughts and characteristics is the cause of the friction of human existence. Every crime in the category of sin has for its motive-power one or more of the elements of human personality. Human existence governed by these traits of personality is synonymous with chaos. The wear and tear of physical existence is caused by the constant play one upon another of these inharmonious elements. Some aspects of personality represent what may be termed natural temperamental conditions and human idiosyncracies. It is easier to be patient with these disagreeable phases of life than with certain other condi-

tions which are self-evidently traits that have been acquired or indulged in order that certain selfish and illegitimate ends might be secured. Personality is a term that includes latent and dormant mental characteristics, as well as those that are recognized as the visible motive-springs of persons. Personality expresses itself in three general ways. First, as the natural characteristics of a person, born of inheritance, religious training, environment and natural mental bias. Second, as the result of a repeated surrender to temptations and depraved instincts which leads to an exaggeration of certain elementary errors, which through the law of accretion after a while become crystallized habits, methods, and actions in error. Third, as visible manifestations of a deadened sense of moral right and spiritual distinction in which the person constantly manifests errors of thought, speech, and action, which reveal a condition of what may be called mental petrification of thought. In this last state of mentality the person is his own greatest enemy, and seems sensitive only to the pain and

suffering that accrues to himself from the mental condition which has been created by a continued surrender to personal erring instinct. For others he has no care. Personality is really but another name for the mind of the flesh, materialism, crudeness of character, carnality, the bestial element expressing itself through all strata of phenomenal existence. St. Augustine called the devil the ape of God. Personality can be well termed the ape of divine individuality. Its worship of lords many and gods many is but a subtle effort to disguise its real intention, namely, the deification of its own selfhood and the worship thereof. Personality is at all times enshrouded in mystery and mist, for like the realm of discord as opposed to that of harmony in music, it is a kingdom of self-destruction, lawless, temporary, and inharmonious. It is personality and persons that are tiresome. Men never weary of nobility of character. He who loves Good as Principle loves it wherever it is manifested and through whomsoever it is expressed. The jangling heart-breaking discords of human exist-

ence come directly from the human mind's vain efforts to harmonize personality with individuality. If what is known as a self-created man allows his success to crystallize into vainglory and pride of personal attainment he then becomes a worshipper of his own personality. He believes that through his own efforts unaided by any divine Principle outside of himself he has evolved his position, power, wealth, and influence. If this type of man gleans from his well-earned success the grand lesson of humility, he finds his individual dependence upon the creative Principle of life. The heart of such a man goes out in gratitude to the eternal law of progress and its Sustainer, in heartfelt prayer and thoughtfulness. Personality always makes the mistake of the first-named type of man. It never reaches beyond the boundaries of its own self-aggrandizement. It will move forward, if need be, over the dead bodies of friend and foe alike in order to achieve its own coveted results. It poses as a martyr while in the very act of carrying on hypocritical operations. It assumes the role of

the saint while using religion as a cloak to hide its infamous actions. Its love of leadership exceeds its thirst for possession. In its attempt to gain dominion over men it loses dominion over everything else, including itself. Personality loves the throne of the dictator and finds its deepest satisfaction in its vain attempt to usurp the throne of the Governor of the universe. The human mind is not only self-destructive but naturally stupid. Self-ignorance is its normal condition. Sad it is that casual observers and unthinking critics confound personality with individuality. While personal habits, traits, dress, speech should really be truthful expressions of individual character, they often tend to obscure the real individual. Thus to the extent that critics stop at these things and judge individuals by them they not only pass wrong judgment and come to false conclusions, but perchance deprive themselves of the privilege of knowing rich and noble natures. It is to be regretted that in the popular confusion relating to the true status of personality, private and spoken

judgment of people is oftentimes based on the observation of mere personality, which misrepresents rather than represents. There are many gradations of error. The lower forms of personality are the most obnoxious, for like the most depraved forms of sin the partially enlightened mind instinctively turns from them. As individual character appears steadily subjugating, displacing, and annihilating personality, the traits and mental make-up of the person goes through a process of purification. Thus personality gradually fades out, and in its processes of extinction manifests less and less that is distasteful and hateful. If it is apparent that a person is honestly cultivating the divine characteristics, the world as a whole is patient with his shortcomings and personal traits, and is manifestly optimistic as to the ultimate attainment of manly or womanly character.

Impersonality is the highway to divine individuality. An impersonal character is one who worships Principle rather than personality. Impersonality is the rising of the eternal day, that dawns on

human consciousness above the horizon of human limitation in the ratio that personality is outgrown. The perpetual examination of and surrender to the characteristics of human personality tend to obscure spiritual vision, limit individual growth, and prolong the tragedy of human dualism. Impersonality rises in the strength of divinity toward the realm of Omniscience, and reveals the grandeur of infinite individuality expressed in the universe and man. Impersonality is in one sense but another name for liberality and scientific government. An impersonal character is one that cultivates relationships individual rather than exclusive. Impersonality elevates no claim of personal ownership. It is jealous of individual rights and privileges and accords to all absolute freedom. Impersonality is synonymous with mental breadth and unrestricted vision. It is the natural enemy of provincialism, bigotry and narrowness, and pursues to its destruction every form of personality. Impersonality does not mean isolation or lonesomeness. In its radiation of individual, impartial love, and righteousness, it

supplants personal and selfish claims with the rights of individuality. Under the law of impersonality every individual moves in his own orbit in scientific relationship with every other idea. Impersonality must be, and is the only consistent method through which the divine impersonality can be demonstrated in the destruction of sin, in the healing of disease, and in the revelation of the image and likeness of God in man and woman. Impersonality thinks of races rather than persons; nations instead of townships, universal salvation rather than the predestination of the elect minority, and sees in the religion of Jesus a universal panacea for the ills of mankind. The human mind is often fearful lest in graduating from the humanly captivating characteristics of personality it will lose all that is dear and essential to its happiness. In the processes of graduation through which human consciousness goes in its journey from personality to individuality there are certain wilderness experiences and periods of lonesomeness, yea of mental anguish. These symptoms mark the advancing

stages of scientific mental growth. These mind and mood experiences fraught with misgivings, doubt, fear, discord, confusion and timidity, are nothing more nor less than the disintegrating processes of growth. During these states of consciousness we are called upon to walk by faith and not by sight. All transitional periods of life are accompanied with these conditions. The cause of it is self-evidently simple.

Individuality in man is the manifestation of the infinite individuality that we know as God. Through the infinite diversity in creation is expressed the infinite creative Principle—God. As personality is the sum total of the person's human characteristics, so individuality is the sum total of the individual's divine characteristics. The elements that make up individuality are positive. Those that form a personality are negative. Personality is temporal and transitory. Individuality is permanent and infinite in its progressive unfolding inasmuch as it represents an individualization of infinite Mind. Mental proximity to the nature

of divine Mind of necessity includes the expression of the divine attributes in the individual. The nearer a mind approaches the similitude of the universal Ego the more such a consciousness partakes of the primary elements of God. In this fact lies the significance of Jesus' utterance, "Before Abraham was, I am." Here the founder of Christianity made public recognition of his eternal individuality which antedated the personal Jesus. Thus he recognized his egoistic selfhood as above his personal human existence. In the ratio that the divine plan of atonement between man and God is worked out in divine Science man enters into the possession of his eternal and harmonious individuality. Individuality is that symmetrical whole in character which constitutes the image and likeness of God. The building of character is really the unfolding or discovery of divine individuality. Individuality and character are really one. Personality shuts out the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, obstructs the processes of natural good, alienates man from the good and pure, and like a

mist hides from view the divine vistas of individual being. As the earth-damps and valley-fogs of the human mind are dissipated by the Sun of Righteousness, the glorious heights and possibilities of individuality appear. Individuality is essentially united with divine Principle. When rightly understood it makes the presence of human jealousy an impossibility, for it reveals the impersonal law of relationship in which every individual occupies his or her place in the divine economy without the privilege of either usurpation or loss of rights. It is impossible for an honest mind to adhere to Principle and at the same time be loyal to the freaks, idiosyncrasies, and arbitrary changes of personality, alias the human mind, as manifested in the average person. Loyalty to the individual is synonymous with loyalty to the fixed Principle of the universe and all its attributes. The individual manifesting in his character the characteristics of divinity is nothing more nor less than an individualization of God visible to his fellow-beings.

Hence the utterance of Jesus, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He who sees such positive graces of character as purity, honesty, spiritual and moral courage, lovingkindness, unselfishness and impartial love, sees the divine character itself, and enters into an understanding of the Scriptural utterance, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" All character is included in individuality. The ideal aspects of individuality inspire thought to soar toward the divine heights. Individuality is new every day. Personality becomes more tiresome every hour. As personality decreases individuality increases. Within the realm of individuality is to be found man's great possibilities, his capacity for not only infinite progress and unfolding, but also the unlimited measure of his capacity for spiritual pleasure. The symmetry of individuality is unique. As every single object in universal creation is complete in itself, so the highest manifestations of the

infinite individuality called man and woman represent the divine grandeur of the eternal God. True individuality is poised, rounded, and expresses that elegance and spiritual completeness that marks all that is of deific origin. Sometimes we designate individuality as richness of character or nature. Under other circumstances we speak of a man whose word is as good as his bond. Such an appellation signifies true individuality in character. While individuality includes the all of character and is composed of many elements, yet the delicacy and perfection of the divine creation is so unique that an individual may run the whole scale of the divine characteristics, and at different times represent a consistent embodiment of the various virtues. Such evidences of the divine infinitude fascinate the mind spiritual enough to behold them, and prove practically to thought the metaphysics of the eternity upon whose threshold man now stands. He who is manifesting individuality on an ascending scale is new every day; his

character is resplendent and luminous in the light of divinity. Individuality has a fragrance and beauty all its own which is intuitively and instinctively recognized by the same resident elements in all who observe it.

TO UNDERSTAND AND TO BE UNDERSTOOD.

I.

TO UNDERSTAND another is one of Heaven's richest blessings, and to be understood by another is perhaps love's sweetest and most satisfying gift. The interchange of common tastes, hopes, and aspirations, through the medium of human language is at once tender, uplifting, and ennobling. But far above the language of the human tongue abides the unspoken intercourse of hearts that understand each other, without the necessity of speech. Similar experiences in life's problem evolve unity in vision, aspiration, and nature. Kindred natures are made so by Red Sea passages and fiery purifications. Unity and understanding come also from the natural innocence and guilelessness of the child heart, ever tracing its course through

the clear ether of pure thought, and under *all* circumstances resisting the impure and depraved. Such a nature clings with the tenacity of chastity and youthful sincerity to the bulwarks of righteousness, "mounts up with wings as eagles," and on an ascending scale unites itself with all that is ideal in manhood and womanhood. To understand; what a world of meaning exists in these two words! To understand; to stand under, as it were, and through clear-eyed vision observe and appreciate, yea, correctly comprehend, that which bases every action, motive, and word of those whom we call friends and companions. This is a privilege for which we must pay. This gift fresh from the hand of God cannot be purchased by coins in human use which have for their standard the fluctuating valuations of fictitious character and unprincipled action, motive, and speech. To understand another—a proposition as simple as it is grand, and as inspiring as it is simple. **It** represents the very goal of mental and spiritual achievement. It involves pure intuition, spiritual discern-

ment, perspicuity, patience, impartiality, justice, lovingkindness, affection. Above all it calls for that understanding of that Golden Rule for life which makes it easy for one to occupy the place of another when either passing judgment or rightly estimating character. To understand another means infinitely more than to come to certain definite conclusions as to the significance of another's actions, general attitude, and detail of career or speech. It includes the mental act of coming into harmonious relationship with the dominating mental characteristics of the individual. It means a knowledge of those essentially divine characteristics which as a whole make the true character of the individual or individuals whom we are privileged to understand. There is a certain sacred and sanctified privilege that goes with the act of understanding another. This privilege is summed up in the word ministry. Ministry involves affection, unselfishness, helpfulness, patience, protection, and sympathetic love. Those whom we understand soon know it. The heart that feels

itself understood by us instinctively opens the door of its exclusive retirement and shares with the nature that it perceives has an understanding of its own, its hopes and confidences, ideals and aspirations. And above all else, yet with a conservatism and dignified reticence that almost approaches silence and mystery, its long hidden sorrows and unseen crosses which have perchance for years been carried silently, prayerfully, with the divine grandeur of lofty heroism, are laid at the feet of that sympathetic understanding which wears the insignia of honest and true friendship. The privilege of understanding another is great. But greater is the responsibility that accompanies it. Because of it we are called upon to protect the friend, shield the sister, or love and patiently care for the child. When we understand another heart and nature the mother and the father though advanced in years receive from us the tender solicitude of an understanding heart, the tender gratitude and perpetual kindnesses that go to make up the mountain heights of human happi-

ness. In understanding the hidden springs of character the true law of brotherhood is unfolded and the interests of one are seen to be the essential interests of all. With understanding comes the responsibility of being our brother's helper and keeper. The critic must be lost in the patient helper, the opposer and obstructionist in the friend, the fault-finder in the loving inspirer, and the selfish and indifferent person must be lost in the nobility of solicitous affection and ministering love. How often in life we find a heart, a tender and sympathetic nature, a character radiant with the graces of constancy, fidelity, unselfishness, purity, womanly nobility, or manly courage, yearning, yea hungering and thirsting to have some honest heart and true nature thoroughly understand it; not demanding sympathy in a merely personal way with the remaining human traits and idiosyncracies, but yearning to have the real life-aims, motives, and unrecognized works sympathetically understood. When this prayed-for event takes place the heart long shut in with its own burden and pent-up sus-

pense, breathes the atmosphere of spiritual unity and sympathy, and a sigh of relief, yea a long drawn breath of quiet satisfaction prefaces the coming of that peace which "passeth human understanding." Here perchance a few words, a look, a thought expressed but in suggestive phrase, has thrown wide open the door of sympathetic understanding. Life seems no longer a state of eternal isolation. Another heart of kindred nature allied to our own by the ties of a common Heavenly parentage, united to ours through life-experiences akin to our own, imparts to us the certain and sacred message, "understand that thou needst not linger by the tomb of thine own loneliness." Glorious is the ministry of understanding others. Majestic is the outcome of rightly utilizing this privilege. Careers may be changed, hearts gladdened, lives exalted, characters ennobled, minds purified, problems simplified, experiences spared, lives sweetened, and the ministry of love and purity appreciated by the righteous use of this God-given privilege. Its cost is great. It comes

not simply through acquaintance with the elements that constitute the human mind and character. It comes rather from a spiritual and intimate communion with the characteristic elements of the divine Mind. We can only understand the divine attributes visible in the character of noble men and women about us by first spiritually understanding the nature of these elements as they exist resident in the Principle of all character,—God. Hence the two great commandments repeated and exalted by Christ Jesus, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength.” This is the first and great commandment. The second is like unto it, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor (friend) as thyself.” It has been truly said that there is no such thing as human history. In a floating iceberg only one-tenth of its gigantic form is visible above the water, while nine-tenths exists beneath the surface. So it is with the lives of those about us. What we see, know of, and as a rule come in contact with in most cases repre-

sents perhaps one-tenth of the real elements constituting character. The remaining nine-tenths, which really constitute the individual, remain hidden and the actual character is an enigma to all except the heart that enters into the inner precincts and holy of holies, through the gateway of sympathetic understanding.

II.

AGAIN let it be repeated, To understand another is one of Heaven's richest blessings, and to be understood by another is perhaps Love's sweetest and most satisfying gift.

If it is a privilege to understand another what shall we say of the divine satisfaction of being understood. God's plan is one of reciprocity. We receive as we give, and approach true life and blend with the eternal plan of the universe only as we minister unto others. Life's school of experience teaches us how to understand and sympathize

with the experiences of our fellows. Sympathy is the soul's silent music, an angel's song without words, the inaudible rhythm of affection, the silent ministry of tenderness, the fragrance of Eden's flowers, the angelic law of brotherhood and the infinite calm of spiritual communion. To be understood, to be sympathized with, loved, protected, helped, encouraged, correctly classified, weighed and estimated, to be understood, to be justly dealt with, individually and impartially served, to have one's faults as kindly pointed out as one's strong points and lovable characteristics are approved and praised, this constitutes the sublimity of intelligent friendship, true helpfulness, and affectionate relationship. In the Heavenly order of relationship there is but one law, one plan, destiny and goal, namely, the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven, the reign of harmony and righteousness wherein all are brothers and sisters, children of a common Parent under the law of love; for what said Jesus, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? Whosoever

shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." The love of parent for child and child for parent, the affection existing between the brother and the sister and the sister and the brother, the tender love, surviving changes of time and use, resting as a halo of fidelity and constancy over the heads of husband and wife and wife and husband, the grandeur that encircles the love of friend for friend with the laurel wreath of fellowship and truth, the higher aspects of love crowned with tender ministration and solicitude existing between earth's highest type of lovers, finally, and under all circumstances, eventually passes through the divine processes of spiritual evolution and purification, yea onward and upward through the seven Heavens of transcendental being, until the true magnificence of Christ's prophecy is fulfilled, "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in Heaven."

To be understood ; to know that our acts call for no outward explanation, that our motives are

instinctively perceived and our careers appreciated in a symmetrical way; this begets a peace and strength that the world can neither give nor take away. As nothing exceeds the bliss of being truly and sympathetically understood, so nothing exceeds the pain of being misunderstood when our motives are right, and our actions up to our highest light are made the consistent offspring of our motives. Perhaps the torture that comes from being misunderstood tends to increase the joy of being understood. Life's ocean is smooth and her skies cloudless when our lives and purpose are understood. Her seas are wildly tempestuous and her heavens lowering with darkened clouds when our best aims and activities are misunderstood. We must possess a conspicuous portion of the character of Christ Jesus if we would successfully live above the ordeal of being misunderstood by those whose sympathy we most crave, or by the masses whose thought we would uplift and whose lives we would broaden. To be understood is at once a reward and a privilege; to feel that even if

appearances point to inconsistency and error, hearts filled with love, compassion, and normal discernment, perceive the true import of our words and acts and therein observe the evidences of definite plan and righteous procedure. This uplifts the heart and lifts our natures above earth's wearisome din. To be so thoroughly understood that our moral courage in uncovering error and our loyalty to Principle above personality is justly analyzed and recognized as true integrity, this creates a holy zeal that no amount of unthinking or ignorant misunderstanding can touch or dismay. To be understood in the little things of life, in the everyday words, glances, expressions, acts, and faintly suggested thoughts which make up the detail of daily life is synonymous with listening to the music of the spheres and abiding "in the secret place of the Most High." The harmony coming from such a state of existence as this reveals God's rounded plan of divine love in which all know even as they are known, see face to face, and worship the Father in spirit and in truth, love each

other even as those who live life's psalm of mutual understanding. To be understood means vastly more than mere personal attachment and loyalty. We earn this rare jewel through our attainments in the world of understanding others. It is the divine compensation or return for so sympathetically and unselfishly entering into the interests and progress of others that in turn they see in us the consistencies of the divine character, and realize the significance of the question, How can you love God whom you have not seen if you love not your brother whom you have seen?

CRITICISM AS A HABIT.

[BY PERMISSION.]

PART I.

Judge not according to the appearance.—*Jesus.*

HUMAN nature in the concrete is a curious collection of habits, moods, and temperamental tendencies. As a rule the human mortal mind combines the depraved heredity of mortal ancestry, the materialism of present existence, and very often chronic pessimism in its outlook on the yet-to-be-lived future. Some people allow their minds to be ruled by God, the Principle of all that is pure, loving, and free. Others allow blind custom, habit, superstition, and depraved tendencies to govern them. Still another class willingly surrender the rights and blessings of self-government to the arbitrary dictates of those persons who find

supreme joy in managing the spiritual and private affairs of other people.

James Bryce of England, the author of that classic of history and civil government, "The American Commonwealth," says that the bane and curse of bossism, or the despotic sway of self-appointed rulers, is the greatest menace to the peace, integrity, and progress of democratic or popular government. How true this is, and how history utters its solemn amen to this deduction of the eminent English scholar.

The human or personal mind has many bad methods or habits. Some of these customs afflict humanity. Others are wholly suicidal, while others end in moral imbecility to the person who indulges in them.

Among the most pernicious habits of the human mind worry, pessimism, dishonesty, unchaste thinking, selfishness, and the spirit of unjust criticism take the lead. Of these, habitual criticism is perhaps the most destructive, contagious, and least restrained of any. The self-appointed

critic mistakes personal egotism for divine leadings. The habitual critic is essentially an obstructionist. He is a stranger to constructive and helpful methods. Personal opinion has become his ruler and self-exaggeration his monitor. His views are to his perverted sense synonymous with absolute right.

Self-ignorance begets moral color-blindness. Self-love strives to embalm the dead body of erring personal self-hood and would make it, as did the ancient Egyptians, their skeleton at the feast, an ever-present guest at its own selfish altar worship. The critical mind looks always for defects, for imperfections, and for variations from the recognized standard of perfection. The chronic critic, like the dog-in-the-manger type of thought, will neither progress Heavenward itself, nor allow the objects of its criticism to advance.

The devotee of the false god of criticism magnifies the weed and ignores or fails to see the nestling flower. He scents the odor of decaying wood and roots on the hillside, but passes by the sweet,

waiting, fragrant violets. He hears the cry of the little child and calls it discord, but he utterly fails to see in such the Princes of Christ's own Kingdom; the inheritors of Life's richest promises. He loses the grand in his smallness of vision and pursues the phantom, the mirage, and the ghost, instead of attaining the realism of living, vitalizing Love. He ascends the hillock of self-opinionated belief and sees a few inches beyond his circumscribed point of view. He calls this hillock a mountain of vision, this limited view a vista well-nigh infinite in extent.

The chronic critic is a self-appointed court, judge, jury, verdict, jail, and electric chair all in one. He is a crystallized fault-finder among his brethren, an anarchist in the realm of individual rights. He feels he is raised up to manage personally his fellows, and his text of procedure is, "The end justifies the means." He tears down where he should upbuild, inspires doubt and self-distrust where courage and hope should rule victorious

The unspoken yet mentally felt influence of a critical mind touches and dampens, as a cold ocean fog, the ardor, trust, and confidence so necessary to the art of right living. Probably more than any one other human characteristic criticism increases the friction of human existence. As an early untimely chill it enters the heart's garden and would cover with the white frost of false accusation the lilies of chastity and innocence, the violets of constancy and faithful love, and the roses of loving confidence and ministry.

As a valley mist it obscures the glorious landscape of a true life and evolves the miasma of scandal, suspicion, and distrust where the freedom of noble character should abide as its own king and kingdom.

Finally, the critical habit of thought, that phase of mind which opposes for the sake of opposing, obstructs so that it can count for something on the opposite side of every question, that criticises because it is neither broad, loving, nor spiritual enough to *approve*, is in a state of perpetual ignor-

ant or wilful disobedience to Christ's great commandment, *Judge not*. The vice of criticism as a habit should and must be overcome by the practice of the simple truths of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and by the gradual acquisition of the Mind of the Master which exalts humility, increases unselfishness, tempers justice with mercy, makes love synonymous with right judgment, and saith to every individual, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

PART II.

Judge righteous judgment.—*Jesus*.

CRITICISM as a habit re-acts upon the critic. It tends to hide from him the sweetness, the beauty, and the righteousness of life and character. The iniquitous custom of judging by mere appearances not only breaks the Christ-law, but assails the most sacred rights of individuals. Honest

natures often stand abashed before the silent judgment-seat of their own consciousness on learning the extent to which their unspoken judgment of others has proven itself erroneous. Judgment or criticism by appearances rather than by definite knowledge and righteousness is too often the fixed habit of religionists and moralists.

The truth of life spares not man the necessity of judging righteously. Destructive, fault-finding, flaw-picking, egotistical and personal criticism is of its parent, the devil or evil. It is the exact opposite of constructive or helpful criticism, alias righteous judgment. The loving criticism that is in itself admonition, instruction, and true fraternal help, uplifts the character that is privileged to receive it. It strengthens a career, intensifying its capabilities, enlarging its outlook, perfecting its methods, and polishing and reducing to symmetry its crude and rough edges. Such criticism between man and man, worker and fellow-worker, is the essence of brotherhood. This is the only legitimate criticism that should be habitual, the

only genuine judgment that is truly born of an interest that is loving.

Right methods, considerate, sympathetic ways of imparting help or offering criticism, should always accompany all efforts made to assist another. Bad, unwise methods of doing good, actuated by the best of motives, often lessen the benefits that should come to an individual from offered help. This too common discrepancy in human ways of doing things that exists between the nature of a motive and the manner of expressing it is one of the most potent though unseen causes of human woe and tears that afflicts humanity. Under the law of love, fellowship, brotherhood, friendship, and pure human association are as one, based on reciprocity. Giving, sharing, seeking our own in another's good rather than selfish self-seeking and personal ambition for power or place, bases all true criticism and actuates all right judgment.

To put one's self mentally in another person's place, to see circumstances as he observes them, and to occupy for but a moment his point of view,

shows the too anxious critic that in nine cases out of ten he is not called by Divinity to judge his fellow, but to mind his own business, which is but a commonplace way of voicing the command, "Every individual must work out his own problem." If in the law courts of nations, judges and juries should come to decisions and pass sentence before receiving evidence, or on hearing only a part of it, justice would be but a phantom and human rights a misnomer. In most cases criticism is based on either habit, prejudice, or self-love. To make it the avenue of Love's message to a man or a woman in need of real help within one's power to give, let it always be clothed in vestments of sweet, pure, tender love; let it wear as a crown the laurel wreath of honest, patient solicitude for another's progress Heavenward, and allow its feet always to be shod with that passion for ministry and loving service that finds supreme bliss in obeying the royal law of Christian discipleship, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another."

SELFISHNESS AS THE ROOT CAUSE OF HUMAN MISERY.

HUMAN experience reveals in an unmistakable way that selfishness is the root evil of mortal life and the chief cause of friction in personal association. The law of instinctive self-preservation, omnipresent and visible in every form of animal life, is the seed plot of all self-centeredness. This instinctive element, strengthened by fear and influenced by self-interest, will among animals and low types of human mentality eclipse even the parental protective instinct and sacrifice its own offspring to protect itself or gain a desired selfish end. An exact analysis of selfishness reveals it as the latent operating parent or cause of all forms of sensuousness. Is not self-indulgence blind to the true interests of others and merciless with the rights of individual selfhood? The untiring search for

Personal pleasure is selfishness in action. Self-exaggeration, egotism, pride, self-will, self-righteousness, self-justification, and mock modesty are but branches of the tree of selfishness, whose roots run in all directions, crossing, recrossing, and intertwining one another in the clay soil of personal self. Jealousy, the most insane phase of human selfishness, is born of a selfish fear of loss or of being personally displaced by something or somebody. It can also in certain cases be justly attributed to ignorance of the law of impersonal, individual relationship between men and men, women and women, and between men and women. Love of money as money for the temporary soulless power, prestige or standing that it gives among the people of the world is an essentially selfish desire. A selfish person is but a collection of self-centred thoughts, elbowing everybody and everybody's rights to win personal position, or gain. Commercial feudalism in business affairs, tariff retaliation, merciless coercive competition, arbitrary monopoly, sectarian religious criticism say-

ing "I am holier than thou," and blind servitude to conventionalism in society's codes and to unenlightened public opinion, are one and all habits of selfishness in a nation. Hence a selfish nation is but a collection of selfish persons perpetuating the heartless law of human greed and mere self-protection on a large scale. Mental partisanship, one-sided condemnation, harsh, ignorant judgment, and the absence of the judicial habit of thought which suspends final judgment or settled opinion until the evidence is all in, are but so many well defined symptoms of a selfish or one-sided view point. These common every-day errors in social life and human intercourse, whether in the home or in the state, are the little foxes that spoil the vines of human happiness, harmony, and true friendship, the crowning joy of which is reciprocal companionship founded on a selfish ministry of love. The habit of monopolizing in conversation, of being an aggressive dominating talker but a bad listener, of being tardy in keeping appointments and engagements, are evidences of latent human

selfishness, ultimating in a self-blindness unmindful alike of the rights as well as the convenience of others. The tendency to get and not give, to absorb and not radiate or share, and to habitually excuse self-guilt in minor things as well as in things of large significance, is part of the occultism of selfishness. Bad manners, lack of elegance or refinement, and crude methods in the small things of life, as often have their origin in an inrooted, ingrowing selfishness as in actual ignorance of right standards of propriety. Brusqueness in speech, manner and act, cruel methods in doing things which in themselves are noble and pure, invariably reveal basic selfishness, else an abnormal sense of fear, dangerous alike to the peace and welfare of one's self and others. Moral color-blindness, a deadened intuition regarding right, honesty, or purity, disclose an intimate acquaintance with Adamic or material selfhood. They also reveal an imperfect understanding of the eternal unselfed Self, i.e., eternal Good. It is as unhealthy and demoralizing to live in the company

and atmosphere of one's unholy, unhealthy, morbid, selfish thoughts as to abide in the presence of depraved people. Thus the undue self-contemplation of a selfish person tends to shut such a one out from the sunshine and holiness of the true selfhood of man, which is the image and likeness of the All-Perfect. Selfishness invariably loses substance for shadow, and drops the real coin to gain the counterfeit, only because the latter seems more highly colored than the former. Great was the perception of Jesus when he said: "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it."

The surrender of all merely selfish aims and methods, the voluntary giving up of worldliness in all its forms, ends in genuine self-revelation, the discovery of the divine self-love, which as a reflecting mirror reveals the higher or real character of man in the likeness of God. Carelessness, indifference, thoughtlessness, methodical exclusiveness, undue dependence on persons or personal authority, impetuosity and love of control are more the products of the miasmatic swamp of selfishness than

of either ignorance, mental provincialism, or "bad bringing up." Selfishness is jealous of its own ambitions, purposes, and ends. It surrounds itself with its own votaries, sits upon the throne of self-ignorance, and to its throne-room allows only those who minister and add to its insatiable thirst for increased glorification and power. At the throne-room door it places as sergent-at-arms its dupe and chief helper, "Fear-of-personal-loss," with orders to admit only such helping co-operative thoughts as personal ambition, love of gain, lust, and so on. Egotism, self-asserting and stupid, tries to present the personal equation at all times and under all conditions. Egoism, the divine opposite of egotism, asserts divine Intelligence as the source of all wisdom and right action. This true sense of God and man shows that man shines by borrowed light, is never absorbed, but with spiritual growth enters into an enlarged sense of the individuality and majestic sovereignty of the idea of Divine Mind. The thought of man has but to recall history to gain full confirmation of the

axiom, "Selfishness is a law of self-destruction, and the best method practiced by men to lose the best in life."

The ancient Pagan deification of human passions in gods and goddesses was but the subtle operation of materialistic sex-selfishness. The old religious theory of an exclusive tribal Jehovah, loving one nation and hating all others, is an instance of religious selfishness. The awful human sacrifices in the rites of the primitive worshippers of the sun and the elements, reveal the old Adamic willingness to slaughter others in order to propitiate the anger of the gods against those who were to remain alive after the innocent and noble victims had been sacrificed. Selfishness instituted and perpetuated human slavery in ancient and modern times. A rebuked sensual selfishness beheaded John the Baptist, freed Barabbas, and crucified Jesus. Citadelized selfishness stoned Stephen, killed the early Christians, instituted the Inquisition, burned Savonarola, drove the Puritans from England and Holland to America, indirectly

brought about the French Revolution, begot the Napoleonic ambitions which terminated at Waterloo and St. Helena, and in many instances the awful war conflicts and butcheries of ancient and modern history. Human avarice, love of possession, and mental stolidity have fought the beginning and establishment of virtually every development and improvement in religion, science, curative therapeutics, invention, government, education, and industrial progress from the time the fire-worshippers opposed the all-nature devotees and the ancient incantationists fought the first herb-healing Pagan priests. And as if to be consistent with its past history this same mortal mind despot during the last month of the first year of the 20th century attempted to drive the inventor of the greatest scientific triumph of the new century, wireless telegraphy, out of Newfoundland, because wireless telegraphy promised to be a menace to the established income of present cable systems. Thus men advance in spite of, not because of, their own human natures.

RIGHT HUMAN RELATIONS.

[BY PERMISSION.]

THE AGGREGATION of good traits in a character is prophetic of entire ultimate perfection; these traits counterbalance the weaknesses of nature, and while making no excuse for them, they bid us be patient with them until they are destroyed by the good. We have no right to demand perfection from our fellows until we can offer them perfection in ourselves.

Things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other; so men and women, if in harmony with God, will be in harmony with the God-like man or woman wherever found. This is emphasized and demonstrated both in the teaching and practice of Christian Science.

He is a law unto himself who abides by the unchangeable mandates of the divine law of good,

Love, purity. Such a nature mistakes not license for liberty, nor does it antagonize any phase of right law, but is latently and consciously in harmony with the spiritual law of Being, the safeguard of society, and the protector of the individual.

A man's acquaintances may be many while his friends be few, yet let it be remembered that a society of friends constituted the social and religious ideal of humanity's highest type of friend,—the Palestine Teacher. Hold not too lightly the sacred word friend; reserve it for the true and tried of life,—those men and women who have, perchance, been made to suffer for publicly and privately upholding your cause or defending your integrity when the cost was large and the hour fraught with misgivings. Confound not the hero-worshipper or partisan supporter, blind and noisy, with the friend in whose presence you can think aloud, the friend who loves the good he sees in you and who rebukes and faithfully points out the error and weaknesses. Be suspicious of him who thinks you well-nigh perfect, whose adoration in a

twinkling turns to fiery hatred or unjust criticism; such revulsion of feeling invariably follows an extravagant estimate of character which is neither correct nor sane.

Let us look well to our own defects and be patient with those of our friend. Like balls that meet, the portions that touch represent but a small part of the whole, yet be glad and rejoice that at this stage of divine character-building, you find as much in common with your fellows as you do. Let the community of interests already established lead on to that full unity of nature which constitutes the bridal of the highest. Use not the unselfish interest in your affairs shown by your true and tried friends as a dumping-ground for your refuse cares, worries, fears, and delusions. True it is that love is reciprocal, and unselfishness a mutual grace which prospers most in the soil of human interchange of hope and fear. Yet remember that the entrance gate to the solution of many a life problem and trial is a solitary gate, through which you must pass in all the isolation of indi-

vidual experience. Friends will lovingly labor to answer your questioning heart, you will vainly compare experiences in order to gain light on the mysteries of your own, but all to no avail, the answer, the solution, yea, the exaltation that is before you, are in the hands of the Eternal. Into the sacred sanctuary of individual communion with God you must enter, there awaits you the new name, the baptism of repentance, and the Jacob's ladder of spiritual ascent; and well it is that such is the life-law. It turns man from human to divine dependence, it fosters spiritual growth, and through the deepest and most painful experiences of life reveals the truth that at all times

Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch
above his own.

A man is called upon by the demands of justice to take account of his brother's limitations and shortcomings as much as he is expected to support him in his strong points. Were this truism more largely observed we would experience fewer

heartbreaking disappointments in people, rave less over those who fall short of the fictitious standards we have set up for them, and be more lovingly humane in our dealings with all men and all women.

We should be slow to borrow, but if we do, we should studiously keep the transaction on a business basis of equity,—security offered and value received. We should also be slow to lend if we would help our friends, and keep the good-will of our acquaintances. Lending and borrowing as a rule are make-shifts, as means they rarely solve serious situations and in most cases are but anæsthetics administered to an inconvenient or trying condition. Undue or enforced obligation often tends to create a peculiar, unexplainable resentment, even toward friends and benefactors. The psychology of this mental state or attitude shows the abnormal status of dependence, and the normality of independence. True it is that “circumstances alter cases,” and “there are exceptions to all rules.” But the “circumstances” and “excep-

tions" which modify the deductions under consideration as to borrowing and lending are few. The friendship or relationship that successfully survives a close range money transaction of any sort and emerges from its mystical atmosphere with mutual respect unchanged and affection increased, can be relied upon to weather virtually any storm on the ocean of human events.

We should be independent, but not brusque, dignified, but not haughty or insolently unmindful of the interdependence of human association. In the words of Matthew Arnold,—

Resolve to be thyself, and know that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery.

To find one's self is to find man as the image and likeness of God. This attainment involves the prior finding, through thought ascension, of the divine nature, its essence and law. Thus is revealed to us the true self-love whose self-assertion is egoistic, not egotistic. By this self-discovery the seer becomes prophet of God and servant of man.

We should be fearless. Act and speak as those conscious of their divine origin and immortal destiny. We should live as citizens of Israel's commonwealth,—inheritors of divinely ordained dominion. Let us not tremble under the harshness of cruel or ignorant criticism. Let us with righteous indifference pass by the petty shafts of "they say." Let us have a hearing ear for helpful criticism, and listen well to our opponents for we shall often make solid gain from some of their frank, outspoken comments. Let us divide between what is true and what is false, and above all, avoid mesmerism of self-pity on the one hand and self-satisfaction and glorification on the other.

We should avoid posing, be sincere. Honest mistakes are better than insincerity; for the former, once seen, are repented of and remedied, while the latter are used to justify latent dishonesty. Better the simplicity that at first analysis seems commonplace, than the duplicity and false martyr-spirit which parade as saintly attributes in the vestments of the reformer.

When a wrong is truly forgiven it is forgotten. We should not say that we "can forgive, but not forget," for the true act of forgiveness includes the destruction of the error. Thus destroyed, it passes out of mind and memory and a true love relationship rises from its ashes. Thus is wrought the miracle of love and justice blending in one celestial essence.

Let us watch lest the habit of criticism fasten itself upon us. Let us pray to be delivered from pessimism, chronic criticism, skepticism, and the lifeless moods of indifference. A fool can criticise anything and everybody, but a man must be wise in experience to approve intelligently and understand. Iconoclastic methods do but little good and work much harm. It is easier to tear down than to build up, easier to give elaborate analysis of evil and evil doing than to explain the infinitude of good and unfold each day in its pure beauty of nature. Hence wise is he who makes his criticism constructive as well as helpful and lovingly frank, who looks for good rather than evil, and who

"judges not according to the appearance," but judges "righteous judgment."

We should see to it that prejudice is uprooted from our nature, and cast out, else life's most blessed gifts will pass us by. Prejudice is a despotic, ignorant, mental slave-holder, which pre-judges and pronounces sentence without evidence, judge, or jury. Let us flee its domain, for it is a false witness, stupid, dishonest, and short-sighted. It separates friends, impedes human progress, be-friends bad institutions, obstructs good causes, perpetuates the enslavement of body and mind, and wars against the best interests of the race.

Love to God and love to man constitute the essence of the two great commandments set forth by Moses and Jesus. Let us strive to be as faithful to the second as to the first, for the Master said that the second was like unto the first. Let us be patient with ourselves and with others. Let each day add to our store of Christ-like character till at last we find the New Jerusalem,—our natural abiding place.

TRUE FAITH.

[BY PERMISSION.]

According to your faith be it unto you.—*Jesus.*

FAITH is a conviction which includes past, present, and future. Faith bases its optimistic hopes for the morrow upon the proven and received blessings of yesterday and to-day. Faith daily increases her store of confidence, and therefore awaits with patience the things which the future holds in store. Faith connects the individual with the reformers of all periods, with the idealists of the present age, and with that glorious company of men and women of the days to be who will be the reapers and gleaners in the fields of earnest endeavor wherein we have sown the seed of righteousness. Faith merges into understanding in one instance, only to progress as a higher form of

faith, and is ready to take the next step in the line of light. Faith in certain truths becomes an understanding of these truths only as the Science of Life is gradually mastered, and demonstration supersedes belief, yet because of the infinitude of Truth the unattained and undemonstrated truths of life constantly demand the renewal of faith and the increase of hope. We no sooner win the objects of our high hopes than we gain glimpses of conditions beyond, on the future's horizon, which seem to reduce almost to miniature the things for which we have so laboriously toiled. Thus we learn that eternal progression constitutes eternal life, and that each day must be complete in itself.

We walk by faith oftener than by sight. The major part of daily living is made up of faith in action, subdividing itself into what is termed confidence, conviction, trust, optimism, hope, and courage. The first movement in mental action is invariably one of faith. True, it may be toward the acceptance of a demonstrable premise, but the acceptance of the premise as a proposition, is a

process of faith. Proof and visible results may follow allowing understanding to supersede mere faith, but the primary step still remains one of faith. The basic assumption of all being, — belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, — is premised upon a mental act of faith as set forth in the Scriptural declaration: “He that cometh to God must believe that he is.” Thus faith opens to man the possibility of knowing the most High. Faith is spiritual patience, and patience is systematized faith. A uniform faith in the triumph of good over all evil manifests itself in poised optimism, good cheer, and directness of speech and action. The vitality of faith is unique, and its power beyond human estimate. How often throughout the course of life’s way is the heart lifted to levels of celestial vision. How from time to time the distant fields, ever green and inviting, are in plain sight from the summit of exaltation occupied through this grace of God, above the ashes of some temptation or materialistic tendency overcome. And again, how often, O how often! are

we called upon to go down into the valleys and low places of human experience, which lie between the mountains of vision, and work out the problem of life, illumined by the ever-present memory of the glory beheld on the heights. Here must faith become a guardian angel, here must trust, ever pointing to the vision given us, beckon to the practical attainment of that which has been seen and felt, not in comprehension or full understanding, but in that perceptive sense of future dominion which is the essential forerunner of the heavenly estate of man. Thus among the valley fogs of doubt and fear, amidst the earth damps of human misunderstanding, and in the center of the monotony of the commonplace, which for a time seems shorn of the ideal, are all called upon to "walk by faith, not by sight."

Faith, the song-bird of the everlasting Love in the heart of man, under such circumstances lifts the nature as "on wings of eagles," above the shadows, and enables every prayerful, honest heart to find its way upward to a still greater mountain-

top of experience. Thus is fulfilled the promise, "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved." Faith is a form of universal encouragement. The success of every department of life is dependent upon it. Faith in God, faith in one's self as the image of the Eternal, and faith in the might of right and the omnipotence of Love,—these three types of spiritual confidence make progress in righteousness and brotherhood a certainty. Amidst the detail of conflicting human experiences faith is on the side of the long look ahead, while fear invariably takes its place on the short look about us. At just this point enlightened faith merges into understanding, and man can look calmly and fearlessly upon conditions once perplexing and fearful, but now seen as the fusing or disappearing of elements or errors in the chemistry of Mind,—God.

Channing once wrote "the science of mind disposes of Satan." Faith is a fundamental in mind-science: first, as a means to primary steps; second, as a mental chain from one phase of proof or demonstration to another. Satan, or evil, is dis-

posed of, destroyed to the consciousness of the individual, in the ratio that it finds no abiding-place in his life or motives. It is the positive, affirmative, progressive humane faith that conquers the world, purifies civilization, blends nations, universalizes fraternal love, and destroys, through the spiritual God-law, disease, pain, and moral depravity.

Faith in God includes faith in the triumph of right in every case. How often we find ourselves doubting the justice of life's common law of cause and effect, when observing the temporary seeming prosperity of the wrong-doer, and the travail of the right-doer. Failing to use the eye of faith to see the penalty just ahead awaiting the former and the reward of righteousness even nearer the latter, we let doubt and skepticism creep in, to the temporary exclusion of the faith that removeth mountains.

How sweet the companionship of faith! How often has its solace cheered and comforted when alone and seemingly forsaken amidst the shadows

of bitter test or disappointment! High hopes often measure the heights of our faith, while spiritual longing for perfection uses faith as its ever-present helpmate. Faith in good is a universal medium of exchange in human experience, and unites all men in the unity of right motive and moral action. Beyond the levels of faith exist those of understanding, making mental unity demonstrable and spiritual healing and regeneration possible. Herein abides the simple and practical worth of operative Christian Science. Through Christian Science religion no longer remains a mode of belief or abstract faith, but becomes a systematic, spiritually mental method of healing organic and functional bodily disease, destroying evil and conquering the causes of physical death. True faith is under all conditions a healing, saving element in its work; yet to it is added an understanding of the divine Principle of the universe,—God,—that removes religion from the realm of emotional assent or dogmatic opinion and places it at the head of the exact sciences, yea, reveals it as

the Science of sciences,—the Science of being. Enlightened faith is a curative, helpful element, and should be cultivated by all who strive to heal disease, remove sin, or enrich daily living.

All who seek health and happiness from the religion of Jesus should increase daily in hope, faith, and in the conviction that God means that all shall be well, strong, and spiritually minded.

Faith in the perfection of God, in the individuality of man, and in the inevitable survival of the pure in heart, combine as one in the nature that accepts with its whole strength the promise of Jesus, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

The restoration of the transcendentalism of Jesus and of St. John through the ministry of Christian Science proves that the age of miracles has not passed, because the age of spiritual marvels and of faith has not passed. Christian Science is Christian intelligence utilizing both faith and understanding in the great work of evangelizing the world. Universalized Christianity is of neces-

sity scientific Christianity, and Christian Science, accepted as it is by virtually every phase of mental make-up among men, proves itself not only the "defender of the Faith," but a living, pulsating exemplification of the healing Christ, Immanuel, God-with-us.

The new age of faith born out of the depths of a world-wide materialism in religion, philosophy, and therapeutics, calls with trumpet voice to the inhabitants of earth, "According to your faith be it unto you."

The world is weary of new tracts of thought
That lead to nought —
Sick of quack remedies prescribed in vain
For mortal pain;
Yet still above them all one Figure stands
With outstretched hands.

"O thou of little faith!" sets forth the rebuke of the Master. His tribute to the trusting centurion, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," registers his spiritually keen recognition of the inestimable value of faith.

Let us, while adding to our faith, understand-

ing, so renew and spiritualize the quality of our faith that the life we now live shall be glorified and enriched by the things which make for purity, love, and peace.

FREEDOM.

“You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.” — *Jesus*.

FREEDOM is to character what sunshine is to the flower. Freedom is the atmosphere with which the eternal Mind designs that all creatures shall be surrounded. Freedom is that state of being which holds sway when the individual is in harmony with the divine nature. It is not a state of existence attainable merely through personal effort. Rather is it the normal and legitimate outcome of mental conformity on the part of the individual to the divine Mind. Freedom or liberty is the only legitimate state of man. All else is unnatural, abnormal, and degrading. The dignity of individuality is allied to and dependent on the dignity of the infinite individualities in which all lesser individualities are reflections. As the integrity of the

real character of man is based upon the self-existent perfection of the infinite nature that we call God, so man's progressive possibilities manifest the harmonious selfhood of his Ego or Principle. The divine plan of existence is trinitarian as well as universal. The infinite Mind, or one God, is the Principle of universal existence, individuality, and manifestation. The universal expression of the divine Mind we call the universe including man. The law or spiritual sense through which man understands and takes dominion over the universe, and through which he grows into an understanding of the nature of God, is the third essential element in the trinitarian plan of Father, idea, or manifestation and spiritual law or divine interpreter. All freedom begins and ends with mentality. True freedom is neither limited nor circumscribed. It gives the same normal liberty and freedom from discord and pain to the body that it gives to the soul character or mentality of the individual.

As an individual comes into harmony with God, the Principle of being, its divine selfhood is

progressively attained and freedom is the very essence of this being. When the founder of the Christian religion affirmed that those who understood the essence of his teachings should know the Truth and this knowledge should make them free, he uttered the greatest promise of the centuries. Freedom is an all-inclusive term. It does not mean simply deliverance from certain phases of bondage and slavery. It signifies an infinitude of liberty and emancipation from all that degrades, produces pain and discord, all that limits the mental vision and interferes with the divine rights of individuality. Man's self-government means government by his higher or egoistic self. This self-being a manifestation or reflection of the eternal selfhood of divine Mind involves the government of the individual by God.

Slavery has many forms. Its ramifications sometimes seem almost infinite. The lower forms of human or bodily slavery are fast being destroyed by the march of civilization and humanitarian ideals among the citizens and religionists of

the world. Emancipation from the remaining forms of slavery is the great work of this and the coming centuries. The horrors of physical or bodily slavery in past ages have come from the fallacious belief that one individual has the right to own and govern another. This outrageous assumption is not yet wholly extinct in the hearts of men. Perhaps the strongest element in human nature is the love of leadership allied to ownership. This tendency expresses itself throughout all stratas of human society from the arbitrary Indian chief up to and including the monarch, whose despotic sway, based according to his belief on the divine right of kings, binds with shackles of arbitrary rule millions of oppressed subjects. The world is beginning to learn the true meaning of the wise utterance, Truth for authority; not authority for Truth. It is beginning to learn that right constitutes true might, but that ordinarily might is the antipode of right. Slavery is the atmosphere of hell. Bondage is the center and circumference of error. To be arbitrarily dominated and ruled by

the idiosyncracies and perversities of a ruling nature is practically synonymous with being a member of the devil's chain gang, whose keeper and scourge can be well named tyranny and false government.

The higher forms of slavery remain in our age as remnants of the general element of slavery not yet fully destroyed in human consciousness. Bondage to evil thoughts and habits is abject slavery. There is no tyranny so arbitrary as that of temper, appetite, passion and traditional belief. These elements are natural enemies to happiness, peace of mind, and individual liberty. The essential cause of all conditions of slavery is resident in the human mind. Every thought must be manfully met and overcome. Man ceases to be a slave in the degree that he becomes free. Deliverance from bondage does not come as much through protracted conflict with enslaving tendencies as through the normal acquisition of freedom-bringing characteristics. As the mind acquires the health-giving and joy-bringing characteristics of the

higher selfhood of man, it naturally progresses out of serfdom into the liberty of the children of God, the freedom vouchsafed to the ideas of Good. The human mind enslaves itself. It pays tribute where no tribute is due. It worships at false shrines and offers up costly sacrifices to its own personality on altars of worldly policy and ambitious motive. The human mind perpetuates its own bondage, strengthens the despotism of its own self-will, and generally works against its own best interests. Protracted discord, mental anguish and bodily pain finally arouse it to a realizing consciousness of its slavery-begetting habits, moods, and procedure. The purification of mind through the accession of spirituality ennobles the whole nature, eliminates harmful mental elements and brings to the mind and character the divine stimulus of natural and divine being whose Principle and only law is God,—the universal and underlying Perfection, creative, all-sustaining, all-governing, omniscient and omnipresent.

In the days of human slavery many born in

this state, apart from the natural instincts resident in every human heart, accepted slavery and the fact of being owned as one of the inevitable conditions of existence. While the enslaved individual could never reconcile itself to the institution as either divinely ordained or humanly just, yet hope dared not rise to altitudes of optimism in regards to freedom. Enforced slavery of long duration always tends to the degradation of mentality. In many instances it ends in virtual depravity and a conspicuous loss of individual integrity and power. He who is governed by the perpetual fears of bodily disease and death is a slave. Minds unduly influenced by popular superstitions, signs, and the thousand and one fallacies of everyday existence are abject slaves. Minds that seek to do right because of fear of hell and future punishment are in one of the worst forms of slavery. The careful student of humanity is well acquainted with the dogmatic and creedal slave, the ecclesiastical and ceremonial slave, the superstitious and mystical slave. The observer of the times is well acquainted

with the vast army of people enslaved by ignorant and credulous faith in certain patent medicines, household remedies, hygienic forms of treatment, mud-baths, chestnuts in pockets, pewter finger rings, favorite prescriptions, attenuated poisons; the impartial medical observer is acquainted with the great mass in bondage to certain traditional superstitions concerning the invariable efficacy of certain drugs, the certain results of definite surgical operations, blind faith in the family physician or the specialist. Perhaps the worst form of mental slavery in existence is that type of despotic bondage which binds the hearts and minds of men to the unholy and savage idea of a God of vengeance, who builds character by sending disease, catastrophe, and discord, or through the operation of what may well be called infinite chaos. These beliefs, superstitions, and fallacious theories are one and all chief causes in the perpetuation of mental slavery. The presence of these miasmatic germs in the atmosphere of thought cripple the mental faculties, enslave the mind and limit its

view of the horizon. They evolve and perpetuate the hell of doubt, scepticism, materialism, and superstition. They obstruct individual progress, impede the advancement of the race, lengthen the days of misery and shorten the years of happiness. They beget all manner of diseases of the mind and body; they create the great mental strife of dualism in which Good and evil, Mind and matter, harmony and discord seem ever at war.

Slavery to any one unnatural, abnormal, untrue, false idea is the first step toward mental and moral degeneration and ultimate materialism. As fear is the absence of the love which includes peace, so slavery is the opposite of mental and physical freedom, which contains within itself the very essence of harmonious being. Perhaps those who are slaves to the hallucinations and nightmares of groundless fear, fearful of dangers that have no existence, and of woes that are purely superstitious, are after all in the worst prison. It is well to remember that the fear of ill invariably exceeds the ill that is feared.

It means much to be free. Freedom is a progressive state. Its fullness is not attained by a single step or action. As long as the human mind exists and the symmetry of divinity is but partially possessed by individuals there will be states and stages of freedom accompanied by states and stages of slavery to either fear or false sense. Progress Godward means advancement Heavenward. This infinite kingdom, this realm of bliss and individual perfection exists in all the glory of celestial being within the individual. Hence the words of Jesus Christ, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Mental freedom gives to the mind perspicuity, breadth, discernment, power, intelligence, patience, understanding, courage and peace. Mental freedom allows the individual to practically live, move, and have his being in God, Good. Life unhampered and unfettered naturally and instinctively blends with its creator, gradually attains unto the harmony of divine being, blends

with the music of the spheres, enters consciously into dominion over all lesser conditions, and day by day awakens in the divine image and likeness of the eternal Perfection. Mental freedom is indispensable to right living. The eternal law of individualism precludes the possibility of one individual being governed by another. Personality is essentially a mask, that which hides the real character or individuality. It is the to-be-destroyed human sense asserting false claims and rights, plausible on the surface, but at heart the worst enemy to the interests of the individual. Among the many forms of slavery, perhaps the most subtle and occult, are those phases of it which tend to keep an individual in bondage to the personal domination of a naturally ruling temperament under the guise of gratitude, obligation, and duty. In dealing with this type of serfdom and unlawful control a thorough knowledge of temperamental characteristics and practical thought-science is most necessary. The human mind is in itself plastic and readily moulded. Mental influences,

suggestions, and thoughts silently imparted are as yet little understood. The popular ignorance surrounding this great unexplored realm is truly astonishing. For generations scholars and students have spent all their time in becoming expert physicists and masters of physical conditions, and at the same time have almost wholly ignored the great world of causative action wherein abides the solution of all mental and physical being. Slavery in its subtler guises takes on many a cloak. The frank, sincere, and unselfish natures are oftenest unconsciously brought into the helpless bondage of this form of slavery. In many of its aspects it quite exceeds in pathos and awfulness every other form of human slavery. It holds unchallenged rule where one least expects to find it. It flourishes within the portals of many a home and environment wholly unknown to those who enter its precincts. It respects neither age nor worth, sex nor sensitive nature, but bends all to its own self-perpetuation. Many hearts alone with their grief, heroes and heroines unknown to the world,

yea, unknown oftentimes to their nearest and closest friends, are wearing away tired years of servitude to the subtle, diabolical, and inhuman systems of slavery. Earth's unknown martyrs are legion. Her unheard-of reformers can be counted by the thousands. Her unselfish, prayerful, conscientious ministers constitute an army greater than any ever visible to the eye of man. Only a small part of the universal tragedy of human existence is visible to the world's onlookers. The masses are generally well acquainted with the plot as a whole, but in many instances the details of the drama, its true setting and characteristics, are forever hidden from view save to the heart called upon to bear its burdens, perhaps unknown to all but the Heavenly Father. And what is the basis, the center and circumference, the real animus of this subtle form of mental slavery, which as a valley-fog chills every nature unfortunate enough to enter its net? Nothing more nor less than the pride of power and the lust and greed of personal rulership.

LIBERTY.

Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

FREEDOM represents man's highest estate. That ascending human experience gives foregleams of final emancipation for every individual is abundantly proved by the testimony of all who pass through the refiner's fire of earthly purification and progress.

Where the spirit or essence of good is, there is liberty, with all that liberty means,—integrity, faith, joy, understanding, love, purity, honesty, health of body, mental poise, and righteousness of living. These elements not only represent the fruits of the Spirit, but embrace here and now the foundations of personal character, the home and the state. Well can we say, the perpetual, persistent longing for individual spiritual freedom, and

for "the liberty of the sons and daughters of God" definitely and surely prefigures the acquisition of this liberty.

"The spirit of the Lord" is not found where fear, deceit, mystery, fanaticism, and strife reign partially or wholly. "The spirit of the Lord,"—the nature of everlasting Love, "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb" and leads the sons and daughters of earth heavenward along the paths of spiritual thrift, mental activity,—the fruit-bearing ways of honest humility and enlightened faith.

Wherever "the spirit of the Lord" is, there peace abides, catholicity of faith governs, and the mean and small things of human nature are taught the necessity of self-eviction from mind, to make way for the incoming tides of the great ocean of good.

All liberty, whether physical, scientific, intellectual, moral, or spiritual, is begotten of "the spirit of the Lord," which embraces all man's interests, for it is ever-present and universal, manifest not in externals, not in beliefs and mortal opinions

surcharged with tradition, mysticism, and outward form, but in the garden-land of joyous careers wrought in textures of the fairest design, after the celestial pattern of "His holy Mount."

This "spirit of the Lord" soonest enters the child heart, stays with him of purified nature, lingers with him who judges not his neighbor, inspires him who tramples egotism under foot, embraces him who frowns upon the habits of criticism, condemnation, and the personalizing of evil, and crowns him with power from on high who loves God and his brother with true affection, loyalty, and sincerity.

At such a hearth-stone of the Holy Spirit, the peace of God abides, and the angels of His presence minister to all who dwell there.

There love abides,
What else besides
Can make a home a place
Fit for the Master's care,
Fit for the hearts that dare
Withstand the world's enslaving war
Against the Spirit's freemen.

The liberty which "the spirit of the Lord" includes and begets, knows no taint of personal ambition for place or power, no enslaving jealousy, hatred, or resentment, which is but evil for evil, wrong for wrong, or error *sent back in its kind* in act or thought, instead of error destroyed through the sending back of its opposites,—goodness, kindness, and mercy.

Where love is there is fearlessness, and true fearlessness is moral might. Timidity, doubt, and a halting indecision, are symptoms of mental servitude to mortal task-masters, else to erroneous belief.

"The spirit of the Lord" is expressed in tenderness, moderation, patience, fairness, and sweet-toned earnestness. It makes man naturally unselfish rather than instinctively selfish, and hallows a life of ministry with the God-gifts of contentment, peace, and clear vision. The inspiration of this spirit illumines the upward path of every Christian man and woman, for it is the spirit of Jesus, the compassion that stoops to conquer, the love that

uplifts, and the spiritual activity that interprets true religion solely as the spiritual experience that leads to the worship of the Father in spirit and in truth.

The liberty included in pure goodness ever wars on and destroys every form of license. Spiritual freedom means the supreme rule of the immanent God, divine Mind; thus it saps the rootage of sin, ignorance, sense-domination, pain, disease, and mental woe. Hence true liberty means progressive exemption from sin, suffering, and disease, and a sure and steady gain in the understanding and possession of the immortal life as the mental, individual likeness of God. He who is free from worry, apprehension, and the pangs of guilt, in a degree possesses a foretaste of heaven.

Genuine optimism consists not in haughty indifference to human woe and the ravages of aggressive evil, but in a faith in the supreme curative power of good so lofty and practical that it carries with it the power to heal these errors. And this optimism is a product of the compassionate, healing, saving "spirit of the Lord."

The joyous liberty with which "the spirit of the Lord" blesses the broad-minded and kindly-natured man, disperses the earth clouds of morbid fault-finding, mental depression, and pessimism. To be bound by these despoilers of our individual right and happiness, is to be subject to the carnal mind, which is defined as spiritual ignorance.

He who learns the alphabet of spiritual liberty progressively frees himself from the serfdom of passion, uncontrolled appetite, desire for the mild intoxicants of wine and tobacco, and the stronger intoxicants of stupefying liquor and drugs. These higher aspects of freedom go to make up the sum-total of personal integrity, happiness, Christian unity, and moral-spiritual worth. They bless the individual and the home, protect society, and enlarge the borders of the general good and the public health. Men and women who enjoy the sight of suffering enemies or tormented wrongdoers, who gloat over the actual detail of moral punishment without a spark of love in their hearts for the finally cleansed and saved individual thus

purified and taught the lesson of divine cause and effect, are not only strangers to the atmosphere of "the spirit of the Lord," but they represent the type of mind that finds enjoyment in the doctrine of eternal torment and pleasure in the spectacle of human or animal combat.

Thus we are led to see that the militant spirit, as Spencer puts it, leads to the re-barbarization of the human mentality; and brute force, military ideals, blind obedience, and mental despotism take the place in human life, of the spiritual impulse of the man of Nazareth.

To guard one's self from being merged in another's mentality, point of view, or methods, to think one's own way out of error into Truth, helped by the light of God within and by the revelations He has given to His messengers in the past and in the present, is to be loyal to the freedom-law of "the spirit of the Lord."

THE DIVINE VISTAS.

IN LIFE'S great round of experience there is no career so insignificant but that has had its Mount of Transfiguration. The mountain heights of mental vision whose steeps have been laboriously scaled with the aid of the staff of experience offer to the heart that which it craves, and to the longings that for which they pray. How many times in life we rise through experience, human loss, silent, unspoken woe, and the crucifixion of the affections to some glorious summit of Heavenly vision and there get an illuminated glimpse of divine vistas of the peace and dominion, freedom and victory that is to be. We live ages in these moments. The whole of life passes before the mind's eye as a quickly changing panorama. Past, present, and future are united in a glorious ~~now~~. We touch the hem of the garment of that

peace which passeth all human understanding, and gaze out upon the divine vista as the man of God of old looked into the Promised Land. How often in such moments the very atmosphere of Heaven surrounds the soul and we realize the hidden purposes of God. In such moments we clearly discern the intent of human experience and suffering and spiritually discern the divine purposes made manifest in spiritual purgation. Through the logic of events and force of circumstance we rise at times rapidly to the mountain heights of spiritual understanding and perception, and gain glimpses of the divine vistas which stretch out on all sides as the heavens cover the earth. At such periods of spiritual enlightenment and experience the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven are made known to our waiting consciousness. The divine relationship of God's ideas is revealed; the universe of God's creation is seen in spiritual perception and the man and woman of His creation perceived in the glory of sinlessness. We wonder and marvel, and in the greatness of our joy offer up prayers of

thanksgiving to the eternal Love for these fulfillments of prophecy, these answered prayers, and now full-satisfied affection. And then as if with the rapidity of a meteor's fall the scene changes, the clouds lower, and the divine vistas seem to fade from view. But the vision was ours. Yea in reality is now our own. But what saith the Spirit? "Thou must now work up to the possession of the vision as a permanent reality." The eternal Love has lifted the curtain; the veil of sense has been dispelled; earth's greater glory has transformed the affections; everything with which we come in contact now wears a different aspect. We date our new born hopes, now luminous with the memory of the mountain vision, from the time when life put on her new garments for us. We have seen, felt, and tasted the glories of the eternal plan, and as we are called upon to labor side by side with the toilers in the valley at the foot of the mount of vision, all burdens are made light, all crosses radiant, and every earth-load is lessened by the ever-presence of the vision vouchsafed to us.

We do not look back to it, but forward and up to it. It is before us a living reality and is to be sooner than we suspect again our happy possession. And thus the Spirit saith unto the waiting heart perchance going through its periods of doubt and misgiving as to the reappearance of that blessed and glorified vista, "Wait thou on God. That glimpse of thy divine estate waits for thee and beckons thee onward. Beside the tideless sea stands the celestial city. The vision shall be thine. Its grandeur shall crown thy life and to thee shall come the voice of the Father, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' "

THE PRICELESS BIRTHRIGHT.

AS A SPRING can never rise higher than its source, so one can never attain a greater success than he believes he can. Absolute confidence in one's ability to succeed is an indispensable essential to the highest achievement. When you have found your niche,—when you realize that you are working along the line of your strongest faculties instead of your weakest,—do not allow anything to divert you from your choice. No matter what difficulties may arise, no matter how much harder than you anticipated your work may be, do not waver or turn back. Stand firm by your choice. Remember that there are times in every career when the thorns are more plentiful than the roses. It is at such seasons that your manhood must assert itself, that the strength of your purpose must be proved. Do not, however dark or discouraging

the outlook, admit the possibility of defeat. Set your face toward your goal, and stoutly affirm and reaffirm your confidence in your ability to succeed. This keeping one's self up to the success standard, and maintaining, in all its dignity and integrity, one's self-sufficiency to accomplish the thing undertaken, is proof of a strong character. Never permit any one or anything to undermine your self-confidence. Never admit to yourself, even in thought, that there may be a possibility of your failure. This constant affirmation, this persistent dwelling upon the possible, or positive, phase of success, and never admitting the negative, will tend to strengthen, to render impregnable, the great purpose, the one unwavering aim, which brings victory. Many fail because their self-confidence becomes weak; they allow people to inject doubts and fears into their minds, until they become uncertain of themselves, and ultimately lose altogether that buoyant faith in their ability to succeed, without which no great thing ever was accomplished. What though you are poor, or your environment

unfavorable! These things should incite you to greater effort. Stoutly deny the power of adversity or poverty to keep you down, constantly assert your superiority to your environment, know that you are the master and not the slave of circumstances, and conditions will soon improve. This assumption of power, this affirmation of belief in your ability to succeed, the mental attitude which claims success on the highest plane as an inalienable birthright, will strengthen the whole nature, and give wonderful power to the combination of faculties which doubt, fear, and lack of confidence undermine. Many a man has accomplished his object by this determined adherence to faith in his ability to succeed, when everything but his determination and confidence in himself has been swept away. One should cling to this priceless birthright as he would to his honor. Thoughts are forces, and the constant affirmation of one's inherent right and power to succeed will soon change inhospitable conditions and unkind environments into favorable paths to success and happiness.

THE ABIDING PRESENCE OF CHRIST.

LOOKING backward down the vista of time, till thought rests with mingled awe and joy upon the central event of all history, the first Christmas, with its accompanying message of holy peace to all men, does not one overshadowing question present itself to all who thus journey back through the centuries, to consider and ponder the deep lessons taught by the nativity of the Virgin-born babe of Bethlehem? Of what present and individual significance is this event to me? Is its import simply historical, or is its essence spiritual and of hourly value to me as a child of God?

Prophesied by the seers of Hebrew history, and appearing in the divine order of spiritual unfolding, "He came unto his own and his own received him not."

By men, he was first seen as a babe in the manger of humility and lowly estate, at twelve he was able to question the scholastics in the temple at Jerusalem, later, a carpenter or builder preparing to enter the arena of human affairs, that he might teach men the science of being, the building of heavenly character "after the pattern shown in the Mount," and finally, "the Light of the world," the great Victor over sin, disease and death.

To the world of sense, Jesus the Christ was born, and to awakened humanity became the divine mediator and elder brother. To none save those who saw in him the "hope of salvation," and the Son of the Highest, did he become the Messiah or Saviour. Are there not millions to-day who worship and believe in the historical Christ Jesus, yet who understand not the spiritual ever-presence of the enduring Christ? How empty is mere historical worship, and how crude and infantile the popular conception of the universality of Christ's words and promises.

The abiding nativity or birth of the Christ con-

sciousness must go on hourly in the hearts of men, else the true import of that great revelation of sinless humanhood, purity, and immortality, is lost. The heavenly lesson taught by that distant Christmas-tide lives for men to-day, as truly as it did for those humble pastoral watchers, who heard the first vesper song on Judea's plains, when through the evening hush and quiet, rung out the great anthem, "On earth peace, good will toward men."

It lives for all who learn the nature of that peace that our Master came to bring.

He, himself said, "My peace I give unto you," and again, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." Christ, Truth gives peace only as it destroys the erring thoughts of the human mind, and mortal selfhood, i.e., materialism. To whom did Jesus bring peace? Surely not to the Scribes and Pharisees, neither to the rich ruler, nor to the man who would bury his father before leaving all for Christ, nor to the money changers, those who loved to indulge in the pleasures of materialistic living, nor to Judas. To each and to all of these

did not his words and life act as a two-edged sword?

But to the patient Magdalene, and the sorrowing families of Lazarus and Jairus, to the fishermen, who willingly left their nets to follow him, to the sorrowful Peter, and to all sincere seekers for "the mystery of Godliness," did not his teachings and deeds mean that peace, which passeth all human understanding, that rest for which the hearts of men ever yearn, and that elevation above earthly living, for which men in all ages have sought? Truly is this Christ-given peace a foretaste of what the Psalmist calls "the secret place of the Most High," the infinite calm of Spirit. It means that men can be strong and restful in the spiritual thought, even amid the discords of earth, and that man can, in Goldsmith's words, be

"As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form;
Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

Not to those who simply bow the corporal

knee at the name of Jesus, amidst the elegance of ritualistic worship and ecclesiasticism; not to those whose lips praise God, while their hearts (thoughts), are far from Him, nor to those who deny the lasting importance of the Master's command, to all men, in all ages, "preach the gospel, heal the sick," will Christ bring peace, but a sword. "If ye love me keep my commandments" is the keynote of Christian obedience, and nothing short of Christian obedience, and nothing short of absolute regard for *all* his commands can be termed true worship, or love of God. Our Master, majestic in meekness, radiated love and purity. He solved life's problem in accord with the divinely scientific law, tore the shroud of mystery from the minds of men, revealed the celestial peaks of the mountains of holiness, healed sin and disease with spiritual law, ushered men into the very streets of heaven while still on earth, taught the universal salvation of all men from evil, discord, and death, comforted the sorrowing, strengthened the earth-laden, and carried his demonstra-

tions to the very zenith in his resurrection and ascension. He revealed Science as divine, the falsely called supernatural as pre-eminently natural, acquainted man with his heavenly Parent, and illumined the leaden sky of doubt and spiritual penury, with the divine practicability of the parental government of omnipotent Love.

Thus learning, that as the Bethlehem babe grew and waxed strong, so must this same Christ-Mind become our all and only consciousness, then, and then only, will the nativity of Christ be an abiding guest in the house of our thoughts and lives.

When in the hush of Soul, we hear the gentle voice of the ever-present Christ speaking in its oft-repeated words, "Behold! I stand at the door and knock," let us answer in the words of Samuel, "speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth,"—enter thou my life and go not out forever.

GOD'S DAYLIGHT.

THE day declineth and the shadows of the approaching twilight are fast falling over the bay of silvery blue, the great tide which for six hours has moved inward from the Atlantic now pauses for its half hour of peaceful rest before it begins its eastern journey to the ocean from which it came. At this hour it knows neither flow nor ebb but rests in majestic peace as nature's tideless sea. The vesper song of the birds is heard on every side, all nature is in tune with the infinite, her mood expresses the hush and calm of the approaching evening hour, the day's work is ended, the returning herds come up from the woodland valleys and from the rugged hills to the place of milking, the hum of insects partakes of the increasing quiet of the gloaming, and the brilliant glory of the sun now merges into exquisite blend-

ings of color, dark gray merging into lighter shades, then into the deep far away blue of the firmament, while over all is thrown as a transparent veil the graduated tints and shades of cardinal and ruby red. The distant driving clouds receive the reflection of these tints and send back a glory like unto that on the near horizon, but with the added charm of distant color. In every direction nature's music voices the infinite calm of Spirit and the peaceful bay answers back this symphony of the overbrooding love, "at evening time it shall be light." Like unto the silence of soul that prefaces the audible voice of prayer of thanksgiving, so this hour prefigures the approaching glory of the celestial city beside the tideless sea, the true abiding place of man, at one in the infinite All. The twilight deepens, the song of the woodland birds becomes more and more remote and indistinct, as if by common consent they too blend with the approaching night and rest from their labors, yea pass from the joy that is heard to that which is silently felt. The tide now sweeps by to the ocean,

carrying with it its freightage of driftwood and seaweed, current crosses current and eddy meets eddy, yet the one great main movement is toward the ocean and carries with it everything not anchored. The twilight hour deepens into night, the afterglow of the sunset of peace now speaks its prophecy of a deeper calm and a fuller rest to all nature's creatures: the silence of Spirit encompasseth all things. Trees, rocks, horizon, fields, meadows, mountains and bay now lose all identity of outline, color, form, and individuality, and the garments of the night studded with the precious stones of light, which like jewels shine forth from the eternal firmament, wrap all in a shroud of darkness, and yet the stars tell of the everpresent light, and the midnight hour glorious in the majesty of its quietude is in itself a prophecy of the new day coming. My soul hungering and thirsting after righteousness seeks the light of the countenance of Him who is Light. Alone with God the heart is one with its Creator, it mounts as if on wings of eagles. But listen! There is argu-

ment but no voice speaketh. There is fear but no man harmeth. There is doubt but no voice opposeth. There is yearning yet no unpossessed glory is visible. There is timidity yet no beast prowleth nigh and no lion roareth. A moment of hope and the mists of sense seem to obscure even the glory of the surrounding calm, but the heart still faces the light with the loyalty of pure constancy, clings to the lesson of the everpresent Ideal, who governeth all things in righteousness, perfection and purity. The midnight hour's holy calm bears silent, almost pitiful, witness to the Jacob struggle, with what? With the belief that nothing is something. But amidst the misgivings of the human heart soundeth the first far off and sweet music of the daylight of God's Allness. Amid the surrounding darkness there appears the first faint suggestion of the new day. God's daylight has already begun its inauguration of calm within the heart, the Red Sea of mental conflict is past, the dry land of spiritual victory is firmly trod with feet shod with sandals of spiritual aspiration

and purity's certainty. The morning breaketh. From one direction and then from another and another come the first faint notes of nature's love concert. The morning birds already herald the new day; harbingers of love and forerunners of light, they speak to the heart their "Peace be still," and tell on the ascending note of audible joy their divine message of Love's new order. Once more the great tide is still. Its ebb and flow are past. It resteth awhile. The rising orb of day illumines the eastern heavens with the same colors that in stately procession and divine order accompanied it at the sunset hour only a few hours ago. Again trees and hills, mountains and valleys, bay and islands, flowers and nature's hosts come to the vision of the eye in all the grandeur of the infant day. The heart conscious only of the peace of night forgets all struggle, fear, timidity, doubt; knows its kingly origin and divine nature, and is at peace filled with the glory of the Lord. The daylight increaseth, the shadows flee, the rising sun sheds its brightness over all, joyous are the birds,

glistening with diamonds of dew, the grass meekly offers itself to the cattle. Again the music of the cowbells is heard, as through the lanes and fields the herds wend their way to the pastures, and all nature goeth on its way rejoicing. The laborer in the fields, and bird and flower, insect and animal, man and woman, know that the Love that is God encircles as the atmosphere, brightens as the sunshine, waters the earth as the falling rain.

THE LIBERAL CHRISTIAN.

THAT man is liberal who stands with face toward the rising sun of Truth wheresoever it riseth, and who joyously drinks in the inspiration of the higher life fresh from the Over-Soul of Good. Such a man lives, progresses, and mounts up "with wings as eagles" and never for an instant thinks that the Sun of Truth has as yet reached the full noon of complete understanding and realization by man.

That man is liberal who depends more upon the unfolding of the divine within his own chastened heart and purified mind, than upon the opinions of men, the doctrines of creeds, scholastic speculation and so-called churchly decrees. He delights to commune with the Christ-spirit, and puts principle above personality, spirit above creed, right above

party, and inward conviction above outward sense evidence.

That man is liberal who accords to all men the same privileges of thought and action that he contends for as the essential liberties and rights of his own individuality, and who is judicious and tolerant, yet clear and sure, in his judgments, whether they be private in the secret court of his unspoken conclusions, or public, as spoken admonition or condemnation.

The man is liberal who recognizes that the experiences of human life, which point by point show the false and temporal nature of all things evil and material, are the different educational courses of progress in the great University of earthly experience, and who learns to draw from these deep lessons of life the true import of their significance as the birth-throes of the life divine.

That man can be called liberal who learns truth from all things, both great and small, from babes and sages, youth and age, birds and stars, flowers and animals, sunshine and shadow; and who can

as readily and humbly learn from the lowly, as himself teach the multitude that may willingly sit at his feet and bow before his wisdom.

That man is liberal whose love to God and man makes Christly character the great test of discipleship, who loves truth, Principle, and good for their own sake, and who spurns fear in religion as an unworthy element, seeing in it a menace to the pure and undefiled love of God. Such a man is noble because of his love for those characteristics that make up true nobility, and his foundation is of rock and not of shifting sand.

That man is called liberal whose heart rejects the blind tyranny of fashion, habit, custom, and so-called public opinion, once named by a great thinker, "a conscience owned by a syndicate"; and he is truly liberal who has the courage of his convictions and who will speak and act for them as sincerely and radically in the arena of public criticism, censure, and abuse, as amidst the approving silence of his own breast or the plaudits of the multitudes.

Truly liberal is he who adopts a liberal religion, and sees in all things God's generous and liberal plan of salvation for the world. Such an one recognizes that the ever-presence of God, together with Love's omnipotence, makes scientifically certain the important fact that divine Mind enters as supreme into every state of life, and is the God who forgiveth (destroyeth) all our iniquities, and also in the words of the psalmist, "healeth all our diseases," for God is all in all, and "in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

That man is truly liberal who makes a loving, pure, and noble life his creed; who sees in unselfishness toward his fellows the true worship of God, and whose cardinal aim in life is to—

"Be to other souls the cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love:
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,
Be the sweet presence of good diffused,
And in diffusion evermore intense
So will he join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world."

That man is liberal who sees in endless pro-

gression the radiant plan of God's eternal law; who recognizes that time, space, finite limitation, the circumscribed horizon of the human mind, and the speculations of human intellect form no real part of the eternal plan of infinite Mind, whose being is Love and whose law maintains the individual identity of all things eternal, from glory unto glory.

It can be well said that the man is liberal who sees in the great thought of immortality the scientific and sure birthright of every creature of God's universe, whose faith in endless existence is based on the doctrine of the self-existence and eternal perpetuity of all that is good and perfect, and whose rational understanding of immortality is built upon the granite foundation of the teaching that Mind and Mind's creations, both in essence being the very selfhood of life, truth, and good, are forever eternal, for—

“To Life there is no death,
To love there is no fear,
What was still is;
What is shall be,

With naught of change for death;
With nothing of decay."

That man can be called liberal who firmly believes in the divine immanence, whose faith in one supreme being,—God,—is so full, deep and unchanging, that he thoroughly disbelieves in the reality or actuality of any seeming force or element which is opposed in character or operation to the nature of the All-Good.

Such a man will see in the spiritual leadership of Jesus Christ a divine revelation of man's eternal and progressive perfection.

That man is liberal who sees in the words of Jesus Christ more than abstract transcendentalism, who recognizes in his promises no limit of following or time, and in his commands to his followers in all ages no portion that can be rejected as a dead letter, or be outlawed because professing Christians of all sects have for centuries ignored its vital demands.

That man is liberal who, on affirming that the spiritual is the only real, has the courage and con-

sistency to follow this recognition to its logical conclusion and admit to the whole world, if need be, his disbelief in the divine reality of the changing, chaotic, and decaying phenomena of life visible to the natural eye and to the material or personal senses.

That man is truly liberal who halts not at the bounds of time and matter, nor at the short span of years that make up the average of human existence, but penetrates beneath the surface of physical life, and rising above the fatuous evidence of the human senses sees everywhere present the glorious evidences of the eternal divine Mind, whose thoughts are things, and whose creations are visible to the eye of the spiritually illumined mind, while they are wholly shut out from the vision of sense in accordance with Paul's words: "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

That man can be termed liberal who *loves* his enemies and shows it in *thought* and *act*; who shows himself anxious to prove his foe in the right,

if this be the fact, and always takes the side of liberal progress, justice, and purity, even if it be to side with an unpretentious minority, or to share a crust for the sake of a principle; yea even to depart from the beaten pathway of the world's sages, philosophers, and popular teachers, if the honest conviction of truth so demands.

“ Then to side with truth is noble when we share her
wretched crust,
Ere her Cause bring fame and profit; and 'tis prosperous
to be just;
Then it is the brave man chuses, while the coward stands
aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they had
denied.”

VICTORY OVER FEAR.

[BY PERMISSION.]

FEAR appears as an assertion of being in opposition to the one great universal essence, divine Love. The Scriptural statements are therefore significant: God is Love. Whosoever dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God and God in him. Perfect love casteth out fear. Whosoever feareth is not made perfect in love.

Fear is the world's greatest slave-holder. Monarchs and peasants, learned and unlearned, the old and the young, the civilized and the savage, all in greater or less degree yield temporary obedience to the arbitrary dictates of this most cruel of cruel task-masters. A mouse may stampede a whole herd of elephants. The greatest conquests of human history have not been the much heralded victories of nation over nation, army over army, or

of man over the forces of nature. Such triumphs may be and have been great, but there is yet a greater conquest. This conquest is the victory gained over fear in the individual consciousness of every human being. The processes of man's awakening in the divine image and likeness of God seem to be from beginning to end a succession of victories over fear, both in the abstract and in the concrete. Fear is both the tempter and the tempted, the torment and the tormentor. Fear is the world's torture-chamber to which the race, through erroneous belief, commits itself. Individual effort, moral courage, and mental ascension into oneness with the divine nature, reverse this sentence and destroy the element of human nature which would lead every individual into this place of torment.

Fear is parent to such mentally debilitating moods as apprehension, worry, timidity, cowardice, depression, superstition, self-deprecation, self-limitation, and that merely animal or fool-hardy false courage, which under stress will hazard the most

unnecessary risks. Fear of suffering and of the discipline consequent upon the infraction of moral and spiritual law often begets dishonesty of thought and action. Hence fear is frequently the parent of dishonesty. Fear is little less than atheism. It is a mood, belief, or sense of things which practically denies the ever-presence of God as all Truth, Life, and Love. Fear is a component part of the Adamic or animal nature; a re-actionary state of thought which is at all times delusion. Fear is the prolific cause of day-ghosts, and of the nightmares of darkness. It has been well said that "fear is the devil's ablest representative agent, the child most resembling the features of its parent." Fear is the intimate and congenial accomplice of evil in the majority of the great tragedies of human experience.

The healing, saving consciousness of the all-Good, all-Love—God—cures disease, destroys sin, enthrones the contentment of peace, and annihilates the false claim of remembered or present

fear. This normal state is heaven's native atmosphere.

The weak links of the chain of individual human nature are the cardinal fears of that nature, therefore an individual's weak points include his leading fears. The conquest of these fears through the acquisition of the thoughts of divine Mind constitutes the divine process through which is acquired the Mind of the Master and the gradual possession of immortal sovereignty.

Fear is a mood of error that has many subdivisions, and is in human belief especially contagious. Through the long centuries of human progress, fear has been the chief weapon in the hands of tyrants. In the ages past, fear rather than love has ruled the race, but the present hour sees the exaltation of Love as the supreme power.

Fear will always be found arguing for the interests and victory of its own proteges,—catastrophe, loss, demoralization, accident, defeat, death. Fear rules over a house divided against itself, for it is the law of friction in itself and ultimately proves

the occasion of its own destruction. The de-animalizing of the human mentality, and its purification through the recognition of pure Mind, leads consciousness by sure degrees into the repose of spiritual activity wherein progress is painless, and individuality is progressively discovered.

As the history of the individual is identical with that of the race in its upward climbings from sense to Soul, from the slavery of fear to the liberty of spiritual fearlessness, so the actual history of the mental struggles of the race as a whole is identical with the history of the individual. The conquest of a sense of indefinite fear must be the starting-point for our victory over human limitation, and an innumerable succession of victories over fear constitutes the history of every ascending career. From earliest times tribes, nations, and peoples, like individuals, have risen from low to high conditions by this overcoming.

Fear does not always define itself. At times it is without form or argument, instinctive and depressing. Under other conditions it conjures up

from the dark chasm of materialism, the bottomless pit of nothingness, some mountain-peak of defined catastrophe, collapse, or fatality. Surrender to what may be denominated the fear mood, brings the mind into the mental realm of false argument, erroneous concept, and chaos, and effectively excludes peace, courage, and happiness. A man's leading fear is that man's personal devil. His minor or lesser fears may be termed the devil's satellites. His happiness and success are therefore in his own keeping, and it is largely his own fault if he is mentally hospitable to this devilish sovereign and his troop.

Strange as it may appear, the first tendency of the human mind seems to be to ascribe reality to the unreal. With further analysis and thought, however, the positive reality appears, and easy victory is gained over the condition feared. At all times it should be remembered that fear gains its power over thought from the fact that a false sense entertained, argues for the reality of the obnoxious unreal. Fear is at all times a pessimist, an enemy

to health and happiness, and a continued adversary to the normal rights of the individual.

"Be not afraid, only believe," said the Master. He who refuses to think a fear thought and mentally affirms Love's allness, dwells secure in the embrace of the eternal. Thus is salvation wrought.

Because sickness, mental and bodily discord, and death menace the instinctive love of life, these errors are most feared by the human mind. Forgetful of the harmful effects of fear, this mind fails to master the deep philosophy of the Pauline utterance, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." Throughout the ages the realm of religious belief about God, man, heaven, hell, suffering, and individual salvation, has been more invaded and ruled by the monster fear than any other department of human thought. Past and present religious thought relates largely to man's future. Wherever the unknown or future tense enters in, there fear will always be found on the spot, ready to give a lurid description of that

which is liable to happen. It has been truly said that "the fear of ill exceeds the ill we fear," and it is a true statement which reads, "Death is the fear of death."

Argue as we may, analyze as we may, search and penetrate as we may into the farthest domains of the enemies country,—thought comes back to the original proposition that the belief in error is error, as the sense of sin is sin.

Victory over fear is not won in a moment. We are fearless and spiritually courageous in the ratio that we are developed in the understanding of Love, Spirit, God, our Father-Mother. Fear has been analyzed for what it is and what it does; not to cast reflection upon those holy souls who are nobly and bravely fighting the good fight of faith and overcoming with surety and certainty this common enemy. The fearless nature is neither brusque nor harsh, but honest, tender, and brave. Moral courage is moral because it has the fearlessness of morality, and is the offspring of a limited spiritual understanding of the first great command-

ment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Therefore moral courage in its higher sense is spiritual courage, and is truly "the lion of the tribe of Judah." Men possessed with a single idea, not at all commendable or exalted in itself, often face disease, catastrophe, and death with visible fearlessness, but these forms of courage do not triumph in the great inner battles of life, or bring the individual to the realm of divine and immortal sovereignty. The most sensitive and spiritually enriched natures often tell us that their lives are beset with many fears and their mental processes register many hours of silent conflict with self-distrust and timidity. They also tell us that these conflicts steadily lead to places of peace, repose, mental quietude, and bodily health, where God's children can rest from their labors and enjoy the blessedness of dominion, and plentitude here and now.

As Good, divine Love, and Truth, the synonyms of God, dwell forever, self-conscious and harmonious, so man, the image and likeness of perfect Being, is forever conscious of harmony,

dominion, and immortality. Eternal Life is progressive Life, and the man of Us, even now and here, has dominion over sin, sickness, and death,—over fear and its myriad sub-divisions. The consciousness of the allness of divine Love as the infinite guide, healer, sustainer, and ruler of man's destiny, begets faith, which leads men to believe all the promises of the Most High, because so many of them have already been fulfilled in demonstration.

In no one way does fear show itself in a more pernicious garb than in its seeming power to perpetuate pain and disease. Physicians admit that the most hideous diseases are engendered by fear, and the severest form of sickness is prolonged by its presence. Therefore love and faith as mental conditions are of especial healing value. Where fear is, love is not. Where there is real love, there can be no fear. We never really love those whom we fear, and the nature that is fearful has not yet tasted the bliss of true love, from which the fear element is forever absent.

Many temperaments are kept in bondage to organized and personal domination because their fears are constantly played upon by the particular dogmas of the institution by which they are enslaved, or by the threats, arguments, and methods of some controlling mind. Slavery to duty is often a form of fetish worship, an attenuated expression of fear. The broad, hopeful, generous, pure-minded, and unselfish nature easily blends with the love order of the universe, and, conscious of its own individual sovereignty, makes of life one progressive song of triumph and well-doing. Fear is the habitual mood of tyrants, and those who most control others by playing upon their fears are the greatest serfs to fear's despotic sway. It is a true saying that "the fear of the unknown and the un-lived future exceeds the fear of the known, even the fear of the possible repetition of past sufferings." Therefore there is an infinitude of value in the utterance of Jesus, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

If children are guided, restrained, and educated

through the sweet, patient activities of love, with a proper recognition of the child's individual rights of self-government when old enough to enter into their possession, this is the Scientific method. But children made to obey through fear of punishment are in constant terror of their parents, and are made haters of the law of right rather than lovers of it. Is it unnatural that with the first privileges of individuality a mental reaction against enforced obedience takes place? This reaction is inevitable, and parents and guardians have themselves to thank for their grave disappointments in connection with those whom they have labored to educate in the right way. Even animals respond to the sweet influence of loving patience, and resent severity and government through fear. The natural and normal love of the good and pure expresses our recognition of the nature of infinite Principle, which is thus reflected more and more perfectly in us; whereas an enforced adherence to righteousness represents an abnormal condition

which inevitably leads to retrogression and collapse.

The jealousy that is born of fear is curable through the understanding of that divine Love which is at once just and logical. An understanding of the law of relationship between individuals is in itself a positive cure for what can be called jealous fear, and the love that prefers another's good above its own is at all times a destroyer of every kind of jealousy, so truly defined by Shakespeare as "the green-eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on."

Moral cowardice is a form of fear which shows itself most conspicuously. Fear of public opinion, censure, criticism, and misunderstanding, is a prolific cause of mental torture and defeat-begetting timidity. Public opinion should not be thoughtlessly or stupidly defied. On the other hand, it should neither be worshipped nor blindly obeyed. Public opinion is but the aggregate sense of the enlightened masses on a given question, person, or thing. To the extent that such opinion has a right

basis and is made up of accurate deductions, which lead to true conclusions, it should be deferred to as a guiding influence in human affairs. But he who through fear of a mistaken public opinion does less than his duty, proclaims half truths where whole truths are needed, will be punished with many stripes for disobedience to the heavenly vision.

Moral timidity, another of fear's proteges, inculcates the erroneous idea that tradition, custom, and usage, because hoary with age and supported by the multitudes, should receive obedient deference from the individual. Herein fear again comes to the front and endeavors to keep man enslaved to mere institutionalism, or conventionalism.

Fear of evil is the self-destructive characteristic of mortal mind, yet evil is the selfhood of this mind and, logically analyzed, it is afraid of itself. And why should this not be so, is it not the law of annihilation to itself? Therefore it fears itself as its own destroyer.

The human mind, always ready for new frights

is stampeded at the sight of our numerous modern synonyms for the one evil which Jesus defined as a lie without any truth in it, and because the modern terminology is couched in scientific phrases it begins to yield itself to a new reign of terror at the awful character of "the ghost" or "man of straw" that it is called upon to oppose and overcome. This very mind would laugh at the thought of fearing evil under its Biblical names, while it cringes and crouches in trembling fear before the apparent power of this same old lie under its modern terminology.

One of the grandest, bravest characters in the history of the race is the law-giver and moral reformer, Moses. The moral standard, which is the forever afterglow of this "man of the Law," stands as a sturdy bulwark of the highest good of the race, and in a foundational way it made possible the greater work of humanity's greatest spiritual Leader and Regenerator, Jesus Christ, who added to his superb moral courage the richness of spirit-

ual courage and faith, making morality mental as well as physical, and leading thought and life through a spiritual interpretation of the Law and Prophets to the celestial glory of ultimate sinlessness. Moses and Jesus stand amidst the eternal ways of man's progress as beacon lights of manhood's highest form of fearlessness. Moses stands for moral integrity, Jesus for spiritual law, and both witness to the law of Spirit, the triumph of true manhood over fear in all its forms. In our own age we are privileged in the degree of our worthiness and spirituality to participate in the wondrous triumphs of a type of moral-spiritual courage unique in the annals of history.

When amidst our present observations of the world-wide growth of Christian Science, its educational and institutional extension, we pause and go back in thought to the time when Mrs. Eddy in the human loneliness of her position as Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, stood on one life platform, with virtually the whole world on an opposite one, do we not stand face to face with a

remarkable instance of woman's fearless courage. At that time cannot we picture her as saying:—

Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound, nor doubt Him, nor deny;
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest,
Stand thou on one side for on this am I?

And so on through the years, by utterance, act, and example, this torch-bearer has borne witness to the Christian Science religion of love. "It requires courage to utter Truth" (Science and Health, p. 97), and it certainly takes a divine fearlessness to uncover the myriad operations of the claim of evil,—the origin of all human fear. Therefore is there not visible in the life-work of our Leader's history the grandest illustration of womanhood's progressive victory over fear?

Finally, thought turns away from the contemplation, of all that is fearful, or that is associated in any way with the element of fear, either in the abstract or in the concrete, and with attention fixed on the eternal type of humanly divine character revealed through Christ Jesus, we behold as in a

glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image from glory unto glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. The mind freed from fear, purified, chastened, and ennobled by the strength gained in holy warfare, mounts as on wings of eagles, partakes of the primary glory of Man, and enters into sonship with God. All types finally merge into the Christ type, as the seven primary colors make the perpetual chastity of white. Jesus prayed that all men should be one with the Father, even as he was, and that all should with him partake of the life celestial. Therefore when fear presents itself to the man or to the woman who would be an imitator of Christ, when timidity projects into human thought the fallacious argument of self-limitation, when apprehension would doom the clear-eyed vision of aspiration and spiritual longing, when distrust of one's ability to fulfil the law and enter into the possession of the promises of Christ seems to eclipse hope and limit courage, let the individual rise in the conscious strength of God-given dominion into the eternal likeness of

the all-Perfect. Let us remember that the Father of Jesus is still our Father, and that as with the virgin, our own pure sense, immaterial and supersensual, still "doth magnify the Lord." Let us be fearless and untiring in demonstrating that the pure in heart are eternally blessed because they see God in man and in the universe, and are forever the fearless children of the eternal Love.

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